



# **MUSLIM POLITICS IN INDIA**



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**TO THE SACRED MEMORY OF  
DESHBANDHU CHITTARANJAN DAS**



## PREFACE

The last two chapters of the book were written first and in the autumn of 1944 when Mahatma Gandhi had gone to Bombay and finished his historic talks with Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah. A desire to preface these chapters with a historical background of the separatist tendency of the Muslim League delayed their publication as a pamphlet on Pakistan. I could not begin writing the background till a year had passed, and by the time I finished, I saw that, like a Shavian play, the book became all preface and little text. And though the book was completed in the last week of December, 1945, I could not get it published till June, this year. In the meantime, the Cabinet Mission had come, talked behind closed doors with the greatest and the least in political life in the land, gone to and fro from Delhi to Simla and Simla to Delhi and ultimately declared that they were "unable to advise the British Government that the power which at present resides in British hands should be handed over to two entirely separate sovereign States". It means or should mean the end of Pakistan and therewith not only the end of the great Mr Jinnah but that of my chapters on Pakistan as well. Here British diplomacy mercifully intervened and saved the labours of the Qaid-e-Azam and the author from being thrown away. Anyone who has a knowledge of the English language and of British Imperial diplomacy knows that, though the English Kings are limited by the Constitution, their Ministers need not be limited by the use and usages of King's English. "Independence of Egypt" and "Independence of Iraq" are illustrative instances. I need not labour the point that the English language has quite different words for what is being enjoyed or endured by Egypt and Iraq. Similarly, India is no more granted that thing which is called independence by lexicographers than Mr Jinnah is denied the substance of Pakistan. If any of my readers think otherwise, I can only ask him or her to read the Cabinet Mission's Plan and listen to Mr. Amery chastened by a late sojourn into the wilderness. And so, the three chapters on Pakistan are allowed to remain. But



they remain as a sort of postscript to Muslim politics (1940), for the background of my original plan has the text

As regards the treatment of the subject I have tried to be objective and non partisan. The whole story of growth of Muslim separatism is an interesting study of course there is ample scope for research yet.

Many friends have given me encouragement in the and I express my grateful thanks to them here. mention should be made of some of them. My young Shriman Arunendu Dutt Mazumdar put the idea into head of writing a pamphlet on Pakistan and helped me with books and suggestions in the preparation of the last Case Against Pakistan of which he may therefore share part authorship. Dr Sachin Sen forced the pace of my last pen and prodded me into finishing the book. Mr S K Chaudhuri and Prof. S N Sen went through the Mr P B Sen and Dr P C Gupta offered valuable tions. Professor Binay Kumar Sarkar did not give me peace till I got the book published at last and overwrote me as much by his scholarship as by his almost unbounded kindness. Thanks are due also to Mr P N F Ex Minister Government of Bengal and present Vice-Chancellor the University of Calcutta for his kind interest in the book.

I must also express my gratitude to Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee for the opportunities of discussion he gave me on the subject. It is impossible not to be inspired by his great passion for a United India on which issue he staked his political future and appears to have succeeded to a considerable extent in stiffening the attitude of the Congress to the League demand for Pakistan.

B M C

16th June 1946  
63 South End Park,  
Ballygunj  
Calcutta

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# MUSLIM POLITICS IN INDIA

## CHAPTER I

### EXTRA-TERRITORIAL IDEOLOGY OF INDIAN MUSSALMANS

° One of the many tragedies of India's political life is the extra-territorial loyalty evinced at different times by sections of her citizens. In recent times, the loyalty for instance, of the Communist Party of India to Stalin and Soviet Russia has appeared to transcend the bounds of healthy idealism and progressive internationalism and may yet prove, as indeed, it has already proved, to be a very potent seed of civil war in the country. But this has been a recent phenomenon in Indian politics. The extra-territorial loyalty of the Indian Muslims worked up at different times during the British occupation of India shows the complication that persists in Indian national life. What makes this tendency somewhat absurd is the fact that in the case both of the Communist Party of India and of the Indian Mussalmans, this loyalty is a one-way traffic. Soviet Russia has not cared to reciprocate the feeling of the so-called Indian communists by showing any affectionate interest in the party's fortunes—far less in the destiny of this country. Turkey and the Islamic countries of the Middle East similarly have not shown any extra interest or, to be more precise, any interest at all, in the fortunes of the Indian Mussalmans as distinguished from the Hindus of India. The great agitation in India to get the Khilafat restored in Turkey did not find any sympathetic echo in any of the Middle Eastern countries which are nearer Turkey than India is and no less Muslim than the Indian Mussalmans are, and what made the Khilafat movement of Indian Mussalmans end in a fiasco is the repudiation of the Khilafat by the Turks themselves who refused to revive the medieval past in the scheme of their political life and

divorced religion entirely from politics. Political activities of the Turks as indeed of all other peoples of the independent or semi independent states are guided solely in their national interests and their religion is regarded as accidental and irrelevant in the political sphere. The Indian Muslims have however in the language of a foreign bureaucrat sympathetic to Muslim aspiration an outlook which transcends the limits of India. Their sympathy extends to their co-religionists the whole world over and this fact has had a profound influence on the political history of India during the past thirty years.<sup>1</sup>

This emphasis on religion and extra territorial loyalty based on religion distinguishes the Indian Mussalman from the Mussalmans not only of the free Moslem States of the world but also of the States free or otherwise where Muslims are not in a majority. Students of history will call this Indian phenomenon medieval. There was a time when religion transcended all other considerations and crusades were undertaken in its name whether it was Islam or Christianity. But that time is long past for the rest of the world. India however appears to be still medieval in the matter.

The first Indian rising against British rulers of which not much is known was inspired by motives which are far more religious than national. It was organised by the followers of Syad Ahmad of Rae Bareilly in the United Provinces who made it possible for the Indian Muslims to accept the tenets of Abd ul Wahab the founder of the Wahabi movement in Arab and who had started in 1820 and worked till 1831 when he was killed at his project of a holy war against the Sikhs then rulers and masters of the Punjab upto Peshawar. After his death his followers were found organising an attack on India from their retreat in the hills and getting recruits and monetary contributions from Bengal and Behar.<sup>2</sup> This Wahabi movement gave a lot of trouble to the British in India both before and after the first Indian revolt of 1857. Lord Mayo was assassinated by a Wahabi fanatic in 1872.

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Sir John Cumming *Political India* p 109

Mitra *The Indian Annual Register* 1936 Vol 1 p 57

*Ibid* p 58

Two things are to be mentioned in connection with the Wahabi movement in India. One is that this was not a movement primarily of the middle and upper classes. It derived its strength from its contact with the Muslim masses, though the upper class Muslims were not chary of helping it secretly with money. Another is that its ideology was deeply religious and it looked upon India as a *Dar-ul-harb* (country of enmity) on the ground of non-exercise of Muslim authority in it. According to the doctrines of the Hanafi sect, the public exercise of infidel authority makes a country *Dar-ul-harb* where the Muslims cannot and should not live. And "under the influence of this belief the followers of Sayyad Ahmmad levied war against the British Government in India"<sup>1</sup> That such belief persists even in the present time and may move thousands was evidenced in 1920 when the deputation led by Maulana Mohamad Ali had failed to get the headship of Islam restored to the defeated Sultan of Turkey and he and his brother Maulana Shaukat Ali began to preach in India that the British Government "had trampled the law of Islam under foot, that India was therefore an infidel land, and that it was the duty of the faithful to leave it for other countries in which Islam was respected. In obedience to this call many thousands of simple Muslims joined the *hijrat* (flight) movement, and took part in a sort of exodus from India. It was calculated that in the one month of August 1920 as many as 18,000 people moved in the direction of Afghanistan."<sup>2</sup> Afghanistan, a poor country unable to absorb so large an influx of population from Sind and N W F P was "compelled to turn the *muhajarin* (emigrants) back. As a result, the tide of emigration ebbed slowly and fell back to its former home, but the road from Peshawar to Kabul was strewn with graves of old men, women, and children who had succumbed to the hardships of the journey"<sup>3</sup> Nor was the lot of those who reached back their homeland alive much better, for they had already, as they left the country, "sold their land and property for a mere song"<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p 59

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Cumming *Political India*, pp 96-97

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p 97

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p 97

Time it may be supposed has brought some change in the outlook of the Indian Mussalmans in this respect. But there is hardly any indication of such change in the contemporary political life of the country. Religious and extra-territorial considerations have still a dominant place in Muslim politics in India and Pan Islamism in however subdued a form it may exist at the present moment still prevents many Muslim leaders from readily and unhesitatingly accepting India as their fatherland.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BRITISH ROLE IN THE EVOLUTION OF MUSLIM COMMUNAL POLITICS: 1857—1906

Though the Wahabi movement had started in the early twenties of the 19th century, it continued for a long time and was not finally quelled till the seventies of that century. The *Dar-ul-harb* theory and its logical corollary, the imperative necessity of a holy war moved a large section of the Muslim population and as India had not been forcibly disarmed by the British yet, the fanatical members of the movement gave infinite trouble to the ruling power. But the British were not wholly unsuccessful in rallying support to themselves even from Muslim quarters. The very distinguished religious teacher, Maulavi Keramat Ali of Jaunpur, a former Wahabi missionary, "proved that British India was *Dar-ul-Islam* (the country of safety) and that as such it was 'unlawful and irreligious' for Indian Moslems to preach a *jihad* (holy war) against the British government established in this country"<sup>1</sup>

The next rising is of course the so-called Sepoy Mutiny which is rightly regarded as the First War of Indian Independence as it was a rising in which both Hindus and Muslims took part to put an end to foreign rule. Though the Hindus and Muslims combined in this revolution, "the blame largely fell on the Muslims"<sup>1</sup>. What with this fact and what with the Wahabi movement, the British anger fell on the Muslims. Already, there was a consciousness in the British mind that the symbol of imperial power had been in the hands of the Muslims from whom they wrested it, and as such they had only to fear a Muslim rising against them. Because of this they treated the Muslims harshly and patronized the Hindus and used the latter as a sort of counterpoise to the weight of the former. The position of Indians vis-a-vis the British rulers remains the same to-day.

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<sup>1</sup> Mitra The Indian Annual Register, 1936, Vol I p 60

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Cumming Political India, p 111



only the relative positions of the Hindus and Muslims have been reversed, the Muslim in the colourful language of the bigamously inclined Sir Bampfylde Fuller, having become by 1906 the favourite wife <sup>1</sup> of the foreign ruler. Anyhow the extent of Muslim suffering has been very graphically and sympathetically set forth in *The Indian Mussalmans* by W W Hunter who quotes a Calcutta Persian paper (Durbin of 14th July 1869) as saying All sorts of employment great and small are being gradually snatched away from the Muhammedans and bestowed on men of other races particularly the Hindus. The Government is bound to look upon all classes of its subjects with an equal eye yet the time has now come when it publicly singles out the Muhammedans in its Gazettes for exclusion from official posts. Recently when several vacancies occurred in the office of the Sundarbans Commissioner that official in advertising them in the Government Gazette stated that the appointments would be given to none but Hindus. If in the extract quoted above the word Hindu is substituted for the word Muslim and vice versa it would read as if it had been taken from a Calcutta daily of to-day run by the Hindus. The British game of favouring one community at the expense of another has gone on unchanged in principle the change is only in the community chosen for the time being for favour or disfavour. If the Hindus had been enjoying favour till nearly the end of the last century the Muslims have been getting their share of extra favours in the present century. It would indeed have been a miracle if in the circumstances the two communities could come closer and realize in their day to day life that the fact of their common slavery is the most potent cause of their differences and that if they could not hang together they must hang separately as indeed they have been doing.

It was not simply in the matter of jobs that the Muslims were treated unjustly. The Permanent Settlement damaged the position of the great Muhammedan houses. The officer (Mr James O'Keefe C.S.) says Hunter 'who has studied the Permanent Settlement most minutely in connection with the present Muhammedan disaffection

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Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee *A Nation in Making* p 218  
W W Hunter *The Indian Mussalmans* (3rd Edition) p 175

writes thus 'It elevated the Hindu collectors who upto that time had held but unimportant posts, to the position of landholders, gave them a proprietary right in the soil, and allowed them to accumulate wealth which would have gone to the Mussalmans under their own rule'.<sup>1</sup> In a word, "they (i.e., the Muslims) are a race ruined under British rule"<sup>2</sup>

By the seventies of the last century, it was felt in the British ruling circles that a gradual reversal of the policy was called for, in so far as the favoured community, the Hindus, were making themselves troublesome. The Government of Lord Mayo (1869-1872) who realised the value of the policy of "counterpoise of natives against natives"<sup>3</sup> began for the first time to look upon the Muslims with favour. The Aligarh Movement grew in the favourable atmosphere of British support.

A word is due here to the great leader of the Aligarh movement, Sir Syed Ahmad. Sir Syed is popularly famous for his great services to his community by (a) opening the gates of Western Education for the Muslims; (b) accepting the British rule in India as a blessed fact and emphasizing the need for his community to cultivate the friendship of the rulers and to stay away from the anti-British agitation launched by the Hindus, (c) working to remove from the minds of the foreign rulers their bias against the Muslim community. The Aligarh movement happily coincided with the change in the Government policy under Lord Mayo as referred to above and as a result, Sir Syed's efforts were crowned with success. He was indeed a saviour of his community at a moment when its fortune sank almost to its lowest level. He very rightly deserves, therefore, the great reverence with which the Muslims as a community remember him. But the question that arises in the mind of the Indian nationalist is, was he wholly right if a long range view of things is taken? Was Maulana Mohamad Ali justified, for instance, when, in his presidential address at Coconada Session of the Indian National Congress, he said "no well-wisher of Mussalmans, nor of India as a whole, could have

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, pp 162-163

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid* p 152

<sup>3</sup> Sachin Sen *Political Thought of the Indian Mussalmans* published in the *Visva Bharati Patrika* (Sravan-Aswin, 1351 B S)

followed a very different course in leading the Mussalmans <sup>71</sup> And yet this great saviour of his community asked his co-religionists to stay away from the Indian National Congress and from Hindu agitation against the foreign rulers It may be that it was a tactical move on his part The Muslims were far behind the Hindus as a community in his time and perhaps he thought his first duty was to give a fillip to Muslim education and bring the Muslims in line with the sister community in material and mental development so that each must-strengthen the other in the common struggle for the realisation of the common good For Sir Syed could never imagine at least in the earlier part of his career that the Muslims are a separate nation rather than a separate community and he was also free from such religious prejudice as to regard India as a *Dar ul Harb* simply because Muslims are not and cannot be the exclusive or dominant political authority in the land For it was this great man who had observed 'In the word Nation I include both Hindus and Muhammadans because that is the only meaning I can attach to it With me it is not worth considering what is their religious faith because we do not see anything of it What we do see is that we inhabit the same land are subject to the rule of the same governors the fountains of benefit for all are the same and the pangs of famine also we suffer equally These are the different grounds upon which I call both these races which inhabit India by one word, i.e. *Hindus* meaning to say that they are the inhabitants of Hindustan While in the Legislative Council I always was anxious for the prosperity of this nation It was again this courageous man who published in 1858 a book in Urdu (*Asbab e Bagawat* which was translated into English by Sir Auckland Colvin and Lt Col G F I Graham and published in 1873 under the title *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*) and criticised the Government at a time when men were being court martialled It was again as Allama Shibli Numani put it that lion of a man who while opposing the Punjab University Bill shattered every argument advanced by Lord Lytton and pressed in the course of three articles Indian

demands in a language unequalled by the Congress; that fearless man who walked out of the Agra Darbar because Indians and British were not treated alike in the matter of the seating arrangements, that patriot who hailed the Bengalis as the pride of the country, thanks to whom ideas of freedom and nationalism could find expression in our midst"<sup>1</sup> It was, let us not forget, he who had remarked as late as 1888, "I have often said that India is like a bride whose two eyes are the Hindus and Muslims" and had further said "slaughtering cows for the purpose of annoying Hindus is the height of cantankerous folly, if friendship may exist between us and them, that friendship is far to be preferred to the sacrifice of cows"<sup>2</sup> Such a man was not meant to be the leader of a community but the leader of the whole Indian nation. Why did he who had started so well degenerate into the leader merely of his community from the leader of the nation? Allama Shibli Numani "who for fifteen years was the colleague of Sir Syed at the Aligarh College and an eye-witness to this tragic transformation of a great personality"<sup>3</sup> says, "But circumstances and his surroundings made him pull the Muslims back from playing their part in the nationalist movement"<sup>4</sup> It was indeed mainly the pernicious influence of the young British Principal, Mr Beck of the newly started Muslim College at Aligarh which effected the 'tragic transformation' As Messrs Mehta and Patwardhan have pointed out, "Mr Beck assiduously tried to wean Sir Syed away from nationalism, to transfer his political attachment from the British Liberals to the Conservatives and to evoke in him an enthusiasm for a *rapprochement* between the Muslims and the Government. He was singularly successful".<sup>5</sup>

This Mr Beck secured editorial control of the *Institute Gazette* which had been in the hands of Sir Syed for years and got him involved in a controversy with the Bengali press because this paper criticised the Bengalis (of whom,

<sup>1</sup> Maulana Syed Tufail Ahmed Manglori, quoted by Mehta & Patwardhan, *op cit*, p 23

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Cumming *Political India*, p 89

<sup>3</sup> Mehta & Patwardhan *The Communal Triangle in India*, p 23

<sup>4</sup> Maulana Syed Tufail Ahmed Manglori, quoted by Mehta & Patwardhan, *op cit*, p 23

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p 58

Sir Syed had said 'we could legitimately be proud and for whom he thought, ideals of liberty and nationalism could progress in our country') and characterised their political demands as anti Muslim. Indeed to Mr Beck, Imperial Britain must be immensely grateful. For it was he who thought and declared that while Anglo-Muslim unity was a feasible proposition Hindu Muslim unity was impossible <sup>1</sup>. And he effected this Anglo Muslim unity for it was his signal triumph to have made Sir Syed oppose almost every proposal he (Sir Syed) himself had advocated for the greater part of his life. When in 1889 Charles Bradlaugh introduced a Bill in Parliament with the object of conferring democratic institutions on India Mr Beck seized the occasion to work up separatist feelings in the Muslims. He presented a memorial on behalf of Indian Mussalmans opposing the Bill on the plea that the introduction of the democratic principle was unsuited to India which was not one single nation <sup>2</sup>. As Secretary of the Mahommedan Anglo Oriental Defence Association<sup>3</sup> of upper India he said in its inaugural meeting The Indian Patriotic Association—a loyalist body with anti Congress activities—proved defective when its activities assumed the form of popular agitation. Besides it was not a purely Muslim organization. It had Hindu members also <sup>4</sup>. In an article he said 'It is imperative for the Muslims and the British to unite with a view to fighting these agitators (Congress) and prevent the introduction of democratic form of Government unsuited as it is to the needs and genius of the country. We therefore advocate loyalty to the Government and Anglo-Muslim collaboration' <sup>5</sup>.

This man dominated Aligarh politics for fifteen years and when he died in 1899 he did not lack appreciative

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*Ibid* p 60    *Ibid* p 61    *Ibid* pp 58 59

The avowed objects of this Association were (1) To prevent the spread of political agitation among the Muslims (2) To support measures that would strengthen British rule (3) To spread feelings of loyalty among the people (4) To acquaint Englishmen in general and Govt. in particular with the views of the Muslim community and to protect its political rights

Maulana Syed Tufail Ahmed Manglori quoted by Mehta & Patwar dhan *op cit* p 59

Maulana Syed Tufail Ahmed Manglori quoted by Mehta & Patwar dhan *op cit* p 60

reference from his countrymen. An admiring Englishman said of him:

"An Englishman, who was engaged in Empire-building activities in a far-off land has passed away. . . . The Muslims are a suspicious people. They opposed Mr Beck in the beginning suspecting him to be a British spy, but his sincerity and selflessness soon succeeded in his gaining their confidence"<sup>1</sup>

It is significant that the policy which was initiated by an English Principal of the Aligarh College in the early seventies of the last century was carried to its fulfilment in 1906 by the untiring zeal of another Englishman, Mr Archbold who succeeded Sir Theodore Morrison, Mr. Beck's successor to the Principalship of Aligarh College. In the meantime, however, though Sir Syed sought to further the exclusive interests of his community, other Muslims were not wanting who continued to pursue the nationalist path originally struck out by him. Even some of his followers and co-workers, on occasions, under the inspiration of Maulana Shibli felt that "Sir Syed's policy needed serious correction", that "the time for independent thinking has arrived." But their great personal regard for Sir Syed prevented them from opposing him openly. While Sir Syed's influence prevented Muslims of Northern India from joining the Congress in a large number, other influential Muslims like Mr<sup>2</sup> Badr-ud-din Tyabji, the Hon'ble Mir Humayun Jah, Mr Ali Mohammad Bhimji and the *Ulema* supported the Congress and advised their co-religionists to join the Hindus to achieve the common good. Indeed, it is to the eternal credit of these brave men and true that they succeeded in the face of such temptations in keeping their vision pure and their gaze fixed on the snow-clad peak of Nationalism far above the valleys with their endless maze of mosques and temples. And of these torch-bearers of Nationalism one figure stands out among the rest in eternal glory. He is Maulana Shibli Numani whom we have already quoted. As Messrs Mehta and Patwardhan have said, "A friend and colleague of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan at Aligarh, he did not hesitate to criticise his famous compatriot when he felt that Sir Syed's great name and influence were being misused by

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p 61

officialdom to check the growing nationalist movement and keep the Muslims out of the main current All these years Maulana Shibli used his powerful pen to inspire on the one hand a whole generation of Muslims to walk the thorny path of Nationalism and to defeat, on the other forces of communal reaction The Aligarh movement thrived under the patronage of the foreign rulers but these handful of nationalist Muslims undeterred by the fear or frown of the foreign bureaucrat kept the lamp of Nationalism burning

A crucial test came the way of India's Muslim nationalists presently in the form of Lord Curzon's scheme of Partition of Bengal in 1905 At first it roused strong opposition among all sections of the community—Hindus and Mohamedans alike <sup>1</sup> Though in the beginning administrative excuses were given for partition it soon appeared that Lord Curzon was thinking of counterpoise and of alienating the Muslims from the Hindus The partition as it was announced gave however an occasion of a closer Hindu Muslim co-operation in the expression of their strong opposition Nawab Salimullah Khan of Dacca was in the beginning a staunch opponent of the Partition scheme and considered it as a beastly arrangement <sup>2</sup> But Lord Curzon undertook a tour in Eastern Bengal convened a special meeting at Dacca and officially gave out 'that Eastern Bengal and Assam was to be a Mohamedan province and that credal distinctions were to be recognized as the basis of the new policy to be adopted in the new province' <sup>3</sup> But Lord Curzon's persuasion for the co-operation of influential Muslim leaders does not wholly appear to be of a political character Soon after the Partition say Mehta and Patwardhan the Government advanced to the Nawab Saheb (Nawab Salimullah Khan) a loan of £100 000 at a low rate of interest <sup>4</sup> Nawabzada Khwaja Atikullah Khan declared at the Congress of 1906

I may tell you at once that it is not correct that the Muslims of Eastern Bengal are in favour of the Partition of Bengal. The real fact is that it is only

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Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea *A Nation in Making* p 185

Mehta & Patwardhan *The Communal Triangle in India* p 27

Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea *A Nation in Making* p 188

Gurumukh Nihal Singh quoted in Mehta & Patwardhan *The Communal Triangle in India* p 27

a few leading Muhammadans who for their own purposes supported the measure”<sup>1</sup> (Italics ours)

But there were other Muhammedans in Bengal at the time of partition whom neither Lord Curzon's fear nor his favour nor the fear of unpopularity among their own co-religionists worked up by interested communal Muslim leaders could deflect from the path of Nationalism. It is one of the proud boasts of Bengal, that it was a Muslim—and a great Muslim at that, who “led the procession”<sup>2</sup> at Barisal which was to create history in the annals of India's struggle and suffering for the national cause. It was reserved for that procession to have for the first time in India's history of national independence the taste of the Police *lathi*. Mr. Abdul Rasool, the President of the Barisal Conference who led the historic procession and who devoted his life to the cause of Indian Nationalism is still the hero in every nationalist—Hindu or Muslim—Bengali home. Another stalwart was “that devoted man” Liyakat Hossain. He was “a singular personality” having few peers even in Bengal for sacrifice, “for sincerity of purpose, single-minded devotion to the interests of his country, and fearless courage in serving them”<sup>3</sup>. Dauntless and unflinching, “he had suffered imprisonment for sedition. He was shadowed by the Police, his public activities were often restrained by official authority”. The Barisal repression shocked the whole country, particularly Madras where a large meeting on the motion of the Hon'ble Nawab Syed Mohammad Bahadur (who later refused to join the Simla Deputation though he was at Simla at the time) “recorded a resolution protesting against the high-handed proceedings of the Barisal authorities”<sup>4</sup>.

While thus the nationalist Muslims were playing their noble rôle in the Swadeshi agitation brought about by the Partition, the communalist Muslims were not sitting idle. Backed by a Government which sought to rule India by dividing Indians, they stirred up communal opposition and riots took place in the district of Mymensingh in Bengal. The synthesis of cultures that had been the result of living

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27

<sup>2</sup> Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea *A Nation in Making*, p. 222

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 231-32



side by side for centuries was sought to be undone by emphasising the differences between the Hindus and the Muslims. The extent of mutual tolerance practised between the Communities is by no means small as is clear from the following extract from the *Mymensingh District Gazetteer*

Strictly speaking only Shias observe the Muharram but many Sunnis and Hindus take part in the holiday and enjoy the noise just as Muhammedans join in the Durga Puja procession and the Manasa Puja boat races. If at one time it was at all common for Muhammedans to wash their pots and mattresses on Lakshmi Puja day and to put of clean clothes after the Durga Puja *the practice has died out since the Partition*. On the other hand Hindus sometimes make offerings at the mosque after winning a case or when their cows first give milk. The habit of joining the Dol Jatra or Holi festival is entirely going out <sup>1</sup> (*Italics ours*)

And yet such happy results of daily intercourse for countless years and of the toils of generations were to be negatived in a surprisingly short time so strong has been the poison of British diplomacy in India. About this time things of momentous consequence were being shaped in the country. We have referred to Mr Archbold. He was appointed Principal of the Aligarh College in 1905. He did not have to wait for long to show his imperialist mettle.

George V then the Prince of Wales came out to India in the winter of 1905-6 and after a tour of the country reached back home in the spring of 1906. It was the time when constitutional reforms were considered. Lord Morley then Secretary of State for India wrote on 11th May 1906 a letter to the Viceroy Lord Minto referring to his long conversation with the Prince of Wales in which he gave me an immensely interesting account of his impressions in India. His key word is that we should get on better if our administrators showed wider sympathy. He talked of the National Congress rapidly becoming a great power. On 28th May the Viceroy wrote. As to Congress there is much that is absolutely disloyal in the movement

<sup>1</sup> *Bengal District Gazetteers—Mymensingh* (1917) pp 36-37  
Morley *Recollections* Vol II pp 170-171

and that there is danger for the future I have no doubt . . . I have been thinking a good deal lately of a possible *counterpoise to Congress aims*.”<sup>1</sup> (Italics ours). On 6th June next, Morley wrote to the Viceroy, “Lawrence, Chisolm, Sydney Low, all sing the same song ‘ . . . Be sure that before long Mohammedans will throw in their lot with the Congressmen against you’ ” and the Viceroy wrote on 27th June, “I feel as you say, that there is no fundamental difference between us ”<sup>2</sup> On 10th August, 1906 Principal Archbold wrote a letter to Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Secretary, Aligarh College, in which he said

“Colonel Dunlop Smith, Private Secretary of His Excellency the Viceroy informs me that His Excellency is agreeable to receive the Muslim deputation. He advises that a formal letter requesting a permission to wait on His Excellency be sent to him. In this connection I would like to make a few suggestions. The formal letter should be sent with the signatures of some representative Mussalmans. The deputation should consist of the representatives of all the provinces. The third point to be considered is the text of the address. I would here suggest that we begin with a solemn expression of loyalty. The Government decision to take a step in the direction of self-Government should be appreciated. *But our apprehension should be expressed that the principle of election, if introduced, would prove detrimental to the interest of the Muslim minority. It should respectfully be suggested that nomination or representation by religion be introduced to meet Muslim opinion. But in all these views I must be in the background. They must come from you. I can prepare for you the draft of the Address or revise it. If it is prepared in Bombay I can go through it as, you are aware, I know how to phrase these things in proper language. Please remember that if we want to organize a powerful movement in the short time at our disposal, we must expedite matters*”<sup>3</sup> (Italics ours)

<sup>1</sup>Lady Minto's Diary, pp 28-29

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, pp 30-31

<sup>3</sup>Mehta & Patwardhan The Communal Triangle in India, p 62

The address indeed was prepared in Bombay and Mr Archbold did perhaps have the satisfaction of phrasing these things in proper language. On October 1 the address was presented to Lord Minto at Simla by a Muhammedan deputation headed by the Aga Khan. This is the famous Simla deputation which Maulana Mohamad Ali has rightly characterized as a command performance.<sup>1</sup> The demand of the deputation was that of a separate electorate for the Muslims and the tone of Lord Minto's reply to the deputation hardly concealed the great eagerness with which he saw its point of view. Said His Excellency

The pith of your address as I understand it is a claim that any system of representation whether it affects a Municipality or a District Board or a Legislative Council in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organization the Muslim community should be represented as a community

*I am entirely in accord with you* " (Italics ours)

On the same evening (Oct 1 1906) the Viceroy received an ecstatic letter from an official who said "I must send your Excellency a line to say that a very big thing has happened to-day *a work of statesmanship that will affect India and Indian history for many a long year. It is nothing less than the pulling back of sixty two millions of people from joining the ranks of the seditious opposition*"<sup>2</sup> (Italics ours)

We have seen the process of conception and hatching of the British plot which succeeded in isolating a section of Muslim leaders for the purpose of using it as a counterpoise to Congress aims and to seditious opposition. But the voice of Muslim Nationalism was not silent. The great Maulana Shibli commented on this Muslim deputation subsequently in the *Muslim Gazette* of Lucknow thus

The object of the Simla deputation was and it was frankly expressed to get a share for the Muslims in the political rights obtained by the Hindus. Day and night its (League's) constant refrain is that the Muslims are oppressed by the Hindus and so

Presidential speech at Coconada Congress 1923

J. Buchan quoted in Mehta & Patwardhan *The Communal Triangle in India* p. 27

*Lodi, Minto & Dargah* p. 47, 48

they must be given safeguards. We do not underestimate the importance of the Simla deputation. It was the biggest show staged on the communal platform. But are these quarrels between the two communities to be called politics? If they are politics, the High Court is the foremost legislature' . . . Politics means deciding the mutual relations between the rulers and the ruled and not the petty quarrels of the ruled among themselves.

"Politics is one of the greatest human urges. It is capable of evoking the noblest sentiments in man. It rouses nations into action and inspires men for suffering and the highest sacrifice. But have our politics evoked these qualities even in a single individual? . . . Is there even one man among the many that crowd our political stage who is ready to devote his whole life to public service on a pittance of, say, Rs 30 a month though he be a graduate or more? There are thirty such members of the Servants of India Society . . . If our politics had been serious politics, they would have evoked a zest for struggle and a readiness to suffer and sacrifice for an ideal."<sup>1</sup>

The success of the Simla deputation and its history convinced the deputationists that the Government policy was one of favouring the community if it allowed itself to act according to the wishes of the Government. Lord Minto was dying to devise a 'counterpoise' and an organization of the Muslims ready to be utilised as such was his chief desideratum. The leading members of the deputation, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk who "engineered the recent Muhammedan deputation" and Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk had started a Political and Social Organization of the Muslims at Aligarh in 1901 but "could not make it successful."<sup>2</sup> The Government was not behind it at the time, indeed Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk by his taking what appeared to the Government a hostile part in the Hindi-Urdu controversy in 1900 angered the authorities and "The Lieutenant Governor was much exasperated"<sup>3</sup> Under the cloud of dis-

<sup>1</sup> Mehta & Patwardhan *The Communal Triangle in India*, pp 29-30

<sup>2</sup> Mohammad Noman *Muslim India*, p 64

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p 61

pleasure in the official sky, the plant of a communal political organization of the Muslims could not obviously be grown by such men as the two Nawabs

But by 1906 the situation had changed the Partition movement and the Simla Deputation had assured beyond doubt the inevitability of official blessings on Muslim politics if it was to pursue its separatist tendency in a way that might put a brake on the progressive march of the country towards self government under the leadership of the seditious Hindus The occasion was considered propitious for the formation of an organization and the very man who had failed to form it five years earlier Nawab Viqar Ul Mulk decided to convene a meeting of the leading Mussalmans of India at Dacca where a large concourse of the leading Mohammadans was expected to meet and deliberate on educational problems in the All India Educational Conference <sup>1</sup> Nawab Salimullah Khan who had been won over by Lord Curzon from his opposition to the Partition of Bengal by such political and material arguments as we have already mentioned circulated a tentative scheme for the formation of a confederacy <sup>2</sup> The result was the formation of the All India Muslim League with Nawab Viqar Ul Mulk as its first President on 30th December 1906 exactly 90 days after the Simla Deputation The first resolution moved by the Nawab of Dacca stated the objective of the League as follows —

(a) To promote among the Mussalmans of India feelings of loyalty to the British Government and to remove any misconception that may arise as to the intention of Government with regard to any of the measures (b) To protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Mussalmans of India and to respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the Government (c) To prevent the rise among the Mussalmans of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities without prejudice to the other afore-mentioned objects of the League <sup>3</sup>

Thus was formed the All India Muslim League which is claimed now by its present President Mr M A Jinnah to be the sole representative organization of the Muslims of India

## CHAPTER III

### THE HINDU-MUSLIM ENTENTE

1906—1924

The most important issues before the country when the League was formed were the coming political reforms (the Morley-Minto Reforms) and the Partition movement in Bengal. Consistent with the needs of the British bureaucracy and its own politics, the League did its best to organize opposition to the Partition agitation. Referring to agitation for political reforms one of its leaders, Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk warned the Mussalmans of India that if we "willingly take part in this movement . . . our culture and civilization shall go to dust, our objective shall be lost in the air".<sup>1</sup> What the League demanded and ultimately got was a separate electorate for the Muslims which indeed is a negation of democracy. The Congress demand of self-government was always viewed with hostility by those who were for an Anglo-Moslem combination against the Congress. Indeed this demand "led Sir Syed Ahmad Khan to ask his coreligionists to keep themselves aloof from the Congress"<sup>2</sup> By agitating for a separate electorate and ultimately getting it introduced in the 1909 Act the efforts of the Congress for representative Government were sought to be defeated. His Highness, the Aga Khan, the President of the League, stated, "Now that we Mussalmans have striven for and obtained a reasonable recognition of our rights, should we not consider what are the peculiar communal interests which will demand the steady attention of our representatives. Our representatives in the Council are first there as loyal Indian subjects of the Emperor, and then as the guardians of any special interests of the Muslims"<sup>3</sup>

The 1909 Act gave to the Muslims what the League had wanted and marked the triumph of those Muslim

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p 100

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p 106

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p 109

leaders who wanted the Muslims to keep away from the National movement. But the nationalist Muslims who cast their lot with the nationalist elements of other communities were not inactive. Men like Mr Badruddin Tyabji and Mr Rahamat Ullah Sayani did their best to keep the Muslims in the nationalist movement of the country. In the Allahabad Session of the Congress in 1910 Mr Mohammad Ali Jinnah a staunch Congress man then moved a strongly worded resolution condemning separate electorates and cursed in a very strong speech the obnoxious virus introduced into the body politic of India with evil designs.

But things were soon to happen which damped the spirit of the Muslim leaders who so willingly and eagerly collaborated with the ruling power. Events in Europe showed that however friendly England might appear towards Muslim separatist ambitions in India, her attitude to Turkey was particularly hostile. She worked for the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire as assiduously as she flirted with Indian Mussalmans. As Mohammad Noman says The war between Italy and Turkey events in Persia and above all the Balkan war created considerable sympathy with Turkey and resentment at the attitude of the British Government. Inside the country also the communalist Muslims got a rebuff. The Partition was annulled on December 12 1911 by the announcement made by His Majesty the King at Delhi. It was a triumph for nationalist India which fought and suffered to bring about the annulment. A quarrel between the League Secretary and the European Principal of Aligarh College had at about the same time resulted in the shifting of the League Office from Aligarh the centre of the reactionary politics of the League to Lucknow. Naturally the League which was founded and which thrived under British blessings and British patronage felt weak and looked discomfited at what appeared to it to be a withdrawal of that blessing apparently owing to what the British feared to be the Pan Islamic tendency of the Muslims which made them express sympathy with Turkey and send a medical mission to that country in 1912. Added to this the Cawnpore mosque affair and firing on unarmed Muslim crowd made the Muslims highly indignant. All these developed a concilia-

tory and friendly attitude in the League towards the Congress and the two organisations came nearer to each other. In 1913, Mr Mohammad Ali Jinnah, a staunch Congressman was persuaded to join the League when the League constitution was changed to promote national unity by fostering public spirit among the people of India and by co-operating with other communities for the said purpose. He even imposed a condition that he would secede from the League if its policy was in conflict either with the Congress or with the larger interests of India. 1913 session of the League is important also for its adoption of the ideal of the "attainment under the aegis of the British Crown of a system of Self-Government suitable to India". The tone and temper of the League at this time will very well be understood from the speeches and writings of the League leaders. One of those stalwarts, Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk who took a prominent part in the Simla deputation and in the formation of the League said in an article at this time, "The time has come when our youngmen have begun to realise that the real honour is the one which the people of the country confer and not the one which the Government bestows"<sup>1</sup> 1913 was mercifully not 1906. The new nationalist character of the League was made evident further when its permanent President, H. H. the Aga Khan left the League and stopped his contribution to it. The fear of the ruling class naturally grew for they remembered what Lord Bryce had said, "when the differences of caste and religion which now separate the people of India from one another have begun to disappear new dangers may arise to threaten the permanence of British power"<sup>2</sup> Thanks largely to Mr Jinnah, Congress-League unity was complete in 1916 and an understanding was arrived at between the two organisations in the form of what is called the Lucknow Pact which formulated a joint scheme of reforms<sup>3</sup>. It is to be remembered however, that in this joint scheme the plan of separate electorates was not

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p 133

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p 135

<sup>3</sup> The Lucknow scheme provided for Muslim representation in the following proportions: Punjab 50 p.c., of the elected Indian members, U.P. 30 p.c., Bengal 40 p.c., Bihar 25 p.c., C.P. 15 p.c., Madras 15 p.c., Bombay 33 3/4 p.c. In the Centre the proportion approved was 1/3 of the Indian elected members.



altered. The Great War of 1914-18 did not see any British eagerness to give indulgence to extraterritorial sentiments of Indian Muslims in so far as Turkey was against the Allies. Though promise was held out to Indian Muslims that the Turkish Empire would not be dismembered and that the British would not pursue a vindictive policy in Turkey at the end of the war, the British, as is well known eventually went back on their promise as they went back on so many of their other promises. As mentioned above in the war years the Muslim League forgot its reactionary character and began to speak in a language different from what it had been accustomed to use. Mr Mazhar Ul Haq, an old and ardent Congressman was elected President of the League in 1915 who declared "we must have independence and open our eyes in the fresh air." Both the League and the Congress sessions were held in Bombay in 1915 and the address of the League President was far stronger in tone than that of the Congress—a fact which enabled Maulana Mohamad Ali to remark humorously that "by an irony of fate Maulana Mazhar Ul Haq had read to his Muslim audience as his own the pungent oration characteristic of the Bengalee and Lord Sinha" and read to the Congress delegates the cautious and halting address of the ever loyal Muslim.<sup>1</sup> But it must not be supposed that the reactionary Muslims did not oppose what may be termed the nationalist capture of the League. The malcontent section," says Mohammad Noman in reference to the Bombay session "with a view to achieve their objective resorted to an appeal to the religious sentiments of the audience. The President of the session was decried and pictured as a man who cannot be called a Mohammedan."

In the confusion that followed those behind the curtain came in the forefront leading the unruly mob.<sup>2</sup> Armed policemen were present in an enclosure just in front of the pandal and half a dozen police officers under Superintendent Walker were patrolling the ground. The Police Commissioner Mr Edwards was also present on the spot.<sup>3</sup> Indeed it being found difficult to continue the proceedings

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Mohammad Noman *Muslim India* p 146

*Ibid* p 147

*Ibid* p 147

the President had to adjourn the meeting and "the rest of the proceedings were conducted in the Tajmahal Hotel." Mr. Jinnah was elected the President of the League for the next session at Lucknow where the next session of the Congress was also scheduled to be held. Indeed 1916 saw a unity and unanimity between the Congress and the League unknown before and it was in that year that nationalist Muslims came to their own. In spite of communal riots in 1914 and 1918, the friendly understanding between the two organizations remained undisturbed for practically more than a decade.

With the end of the war, new fetters were being forged by the bureaucracy in the form of the Rowlatt Bill. Muslim opinion was greatly shocked at the condition of Turkey and at the failure of the deputation of Maulana Mohamad Ali to get a humane treatment of Turkey. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report dissatisfied both the Congress and the League. Even before the report came out, Raja of Mahammadabad acting in the absence of the President-elect (Maulana Mohamad Ali who was interned) said in the Calcutta session of the League, 1917,

"The interests of the country are paramount. We need not tarry to argue whether we are Muslims first or Indians. The fact is we are both, and to us the question of precedence has no meaning. The League has inculcated in the Muslims a spirit of sacrifice for their country as much as for their religion."<sup>1</sup>

The Khilafat movement was born in 1918 thanks to the threat of the dissolution of the Khilafat as a result of the defeat of Turkey and the imposition on her of very severe peace terms. A Khilafat Conference was convened and it declared for the boycott of British goods and non-cooperation with the Government under the advice of Mahatma Gandhi. The Hindu opinion sympathised with the Muslim cause and the Congress and the League were united in impressing upon the British the strength of the Khilafat movement in India. The address of Dr. Ansari, the Chairman, Reception Committee of the League session at Delhi in 1918 was proscribed. Next year all the nationalist forces in the country the Indian National Congress, the

<sup>1</sup> Mehta & Patwardhan. The Communal Triangle in India, p. 35

League the Khilafat Conference and the *Jamiat Ul Ulema* met at Amritsar and deliberated on their course of action. The *Jamiat-Ul Ulema* was a new organization started by Muslim divines who are said to hate flattery and sycophancy and who are accustomed to face tyrants for truth. The Leader of the *Jamiat* Maulana Mohammad Ul Hasan a most celebrated Muslim divine who had a past record of suffering at the hands of the British for anti Government activities in the war plunged headlong into the movement. Indeed it must be admitted that it was the Muslim awakening in 1918 and 1919 that showed the way to the Congress which adopted the Non co-operation resolution in 1920 long after the Khilafat movement had been started. In the meantime Mahatma Gandhi started the Satyagraha campaign against the passing of the Rowlatt Bill and consequent on it the Punjab saw a British reign of terror hardly equalled in the province before or since. It led to what is known as Jallianwalla Bagh massacre which kindled the wrath of the people of the country as never before and perhaps decided more than any single action of the British the course of action for the Indian people. 1921 saw a mass upheaval brought about by a united struggle of Hindus and Muslims against the British rule. If 1916 saw Hindu Muslim unity on the constitutional plane 1921 saw a unity on the basis of struggle against foreign rulers. The reactionary elements in the League were routed. Indeed the League itself 'as Mr Jinnah put it had perforce to go into the back ground' <sup>1</sup> when the country was convulsed by the mass upsurge created by Non Co-operation and Khilafat movements. Dr Ansari that great Muslim nationalist leader whose address was proscribed at Delhi presided over the 1920 session of the League. The mass struggle into which the Congress and the Khilafat Conference jointly plunged the country reached its acme towards the end of the year 1921. But in the beginning of the next year when the struggle was still at its height Mahatma Gandhi called it off owing to what is known as the Chauri Chaura incident. In Turkey the Turks themselves abolished the Khilafat and both the movements had to end not in what is usually called a success. But they showed the realities of Hindu Muslim

<sup>1</sup> Mohammad Noman *Muslim India* p 219

unity when it is based on action and struggle and the tremendous possibilities of that unity when the communities realise that they are bound by ties of common sorrows and suffering and actuated by the spirit of nationalism. The questions of cow-killing and of music before mosque lost their false importance in the life and death struggle that was waged in the name of independence of the country. The Congress and the League came very close together not for the purpose of negotiation of a Hindu-Muslim pact or understanding but for waging war against the common enemy of Indian independence, *viz*, the British imperialism. There were times when the League outshone the Congress in its extreme nationalism. Maulana Hasrat Mohani, as the League President in 1921 at Ahmedabad where the Congress session was also held that year under the presidency of Hakim Ajmal Khan (elected in the absence of Desbandhu Das in jail) got gaoled for his presidential speech, while the same man had moved in the Congress session at Ahmedabad the Swaraj resolution defining Swaraj as "complete independence, free from all foreign control" and strangely enough been resisted and even rebuked by Gandhiji himself as leading the Congress "into depths unfathomable". "So impassioned was his (Maulana Hasrat Mohani's) eloquence" said Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, "and so responsive was the audience that one felt as if the resolution would be carried by a large majority"<sup>1</sup>. Though, complete independence was a "depth unfathomable" for Gandhiji then and continued to be so till the last week of December, 1929, it is clear, other leaders, both Hindu and Muslim, left him miles behind in their desire for making this goal as their creed. It is therefore not wholly true to say that the 1920-21 movement inspired the Muslims only because it involved the fate of the Khilafat—a religious issue. One has to realise the pernicious forces implicit in the circumstances which have conspired to keep in the background the Muslims who are not less militant and uncompromising than the Hindus once they join the struggle for the political independence of India.

We have seen that H. H. the Aga Khan, the leader of the Simla Deputation in 1906 and Permanent President of

<sup>1</sup> Subhas C. Bose *The Indian Struggle*, p. 84

the League left it when it adopted self government as its goal. When Mustafa Kemal Pasha abolished the Khilafat as a symbol of temporal Power this Muslim leader along with Mr Amir Ali published a letter to the Turkish dictator who promptly put them in their proper place by openly alleging that 'these persons were the henchmen of the British.'<sup>1</sup> Indeed the reactionary Muslims who would much rather let the British exploit India than realise their community of interests with non Muslim Indians have always been held in contempt in the Muslim countries of the world

After the 1921-22 movement had ended there was for some time a deterioration in the relation between Hindus and Muslims. The nationalist elements were mostly in prison and the reactionaries were coming to the foreground. The 1923 session of the League could not be held for want of a quorum. Though League politics was at a low ebb the Congress in 1923 under the virtual leadership of Deshbandhu Das (the annual session was presided over by Maulana Mohamad Ali at Cocanada) whose dynamic personality great political wisdom wonderful optimistic courage that knew no defeat and turned failure into a success and magic capacity to achieve what he set before himself directed the efforts of the nation along a channel where it achieved success and victory and got over the feeling of frustration which followed Gandhiji's abrupt and untimely calling off of the Non-co operation Movement. Das 'is particularly memorable in the communal context as the one man whose vision and foresight generosity and wisdom not only realized the real nature of the communal problem set up by the British but showed the way how to tackle it and to solve it. The Bengal Pact he brought about was not fashioned *in vacuo* it was not a negative weapon to forge Hindu Muslim unity. But it was framed on the basis of fighting the reforms which he was determined to mend or end'. But what is most significant was that he could effect the deal and achieve the purpose for which he framed it. The principle that Das set before himself was not a negative spineless unity but a unity that was dynamic that was based on action and not merely on pious wish. His attempt to get his 'Bengal Pact' approved by the Congress

at Cocanada was however frustrated and "the pact was rejected"<sup>1</sup> by the Congress, though in Bengal politics, the Pact achieved the purpose for which it was made.

The next few years saw a worsening of the communal situation in the country attended with frequent riots and bad blood in the two communities. There were honest attempts to forge chains of unity between them. The Bombay session of the League, 1924, presided over by Mr. Syed Raza Ali "once again attracted on its platform Dr Besant, Messrs Nehru, Patel and many other party leaders" and gave "a new orientation to the League policy". In the Central Assembly Pandit Motilal Nehru, leader of the Swarajya Party in the Central Assembly moved a resolution demanding a Round Table Conference to draw up a Constitution for India establishing full responsible government in this country. The Constitutional question coming to the fore, the League began to show its activity. As Mohammad Noman says, "The Muslim League which had receded into background received fresh momentum as a result of *constitutional agitation*"<sup>2</sup> (*Italics ours*). Mr Jinnah naturally came into his own as a skilled debator assailing the British case with his ratiocinative excellence which is the chief weapon of constitutional agitation. The British point of view was that Indians were not a nation and Mr Jinnah flared up, "How were they represented on the League of Nations as a nation? Was it that India was a nation, when it suited the British and not, when it did not?"<sup>3</sup>

Fresh attempts at unity between the League and the Congress had begun in 1924 and continued intermittently till 1928 and appeared to end in failure with the failure of the Convention of the All-Parties' Conference in December, 1928 in Calcutta. India had to fight another war with the British in 1930, but this time, the Muslim League stayed away from this struggle. The League had been busy all through 1924, 1925 and 1926 to define "the position of the Mussalmans with respect to any forthcoming change of the

<sup>1</sup> Subhas C Bose *The Indian Struggle*, p 110

<sup>2</sup> Mohammad Noman *Muslim India*, p 223

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p 224

constitution in the country It advocated "effective representation of minorities in every province without reducing the majority in any province to a minority or even to an equality and it further reiterated the demands of the Mussalmans for separate electorate <sup>1</sup> Thus all its emphasis during these years had been on the sharing of the power to be wrested from the British and none on the co-operation in the coming struggle to wrest it

## CHAPTER IV

### THE COMMUNAL CLASHES AND THE UNITY CONFERENCES

1924—1926

As we have mentioned in the last chapter, the cessation of hostilities between the Congress and the British in 1922 was followed soon after by the frequency of communal clashes in different parts of the country. 1924 was a particularly bad year when riots broke out in many parts of India particularly at Kohat which was the worst of their kind. These riots led Gandhiji to undertake twenty-one days' fast in Maulana Mohamad Ali's house at Delhi which gave an occasion to leaders of both the communities to convene a Unity Conference at Delhi on September 26th which continued till October 2nd. This was followed by another All-parties Conference in Bombay in November of the same year. The Bombay Conference had other items in the agenda besides the communal question. The A I C C also met at the same time in the same town. The Conference appointed a Committee of representatives of all parties to prepare a scheme of Swaraj including a Communal Settlement and to submit its report not later than 31st March, 1925. The Delhi Conference laid down "certain fundamental rights relating to liberty of holding and expressing religious beliefs and following<sup>1</sup> religious practice, sacredness of places of worship, cow-slaughter, and music before mosques, with a statement of the limitations they must be subject to"<sup>1</sup>. Apparently, this pious resolution had little practical effect. The Committee appointed at Bombay "did not succeed in producing anything presentable and adjourned its sittings *sine die* in March"<sup>2</sup>. 1926 was another bad year attended with communal riots. The Viceroy, Lord Irwin in his address to the Indian Legislature in August next year gave the figures of the killed and the wounded in communal

<sup>1</sup> Pattabhi Sitaramayya *History of the Congress*, p. 466

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 474



riots and exhorted the communities to stop this slaughter. This led to a Unity Conference at Simla in September of that year, no conclusion, however was reached on some of the questions as music before mosques and cow sacrifice.<sup>1</sup>

The conflict between Hindus and Mussalmans precipitated always on two issues one religious and the other political though in reality they are related to each other sometimes as cause and effect and sometimes as the two manifestations of the same thing. The clashes spring from suspicion which seems to be rooted in the psychology of the communities. The religious question has an element of irony in it because though the name of religion is dragged there is really nothing in religion proper which might precipitate any conflict. However the religious cause of conflict is killing cows by the Muslims particularly in public places and leading processions by Hindus with music before mosques particularly at the hours of Muslim worship. Common sense would not see any reason why the Muslims cannot stop killing cows in public places if it offends any other community and why the Hindus cannot refrain from playing music before mosques during the hours of worship if peace is ensured thereby. Indeed both the communities have shown the needed tolerance at different times and their religion did not suffer thereby. The tolerant attitude had been taken up only when the leaders of both communities came sincerely closer to each other and preached the gospel of unity to their respective communities. The religious tolerance that has been shown by the masses of both the communities in India is unique. Swami Shraddha nanda was allowed nay enthusiastically welcomed to speak in a Delhi mosque to Muslims. The same Swami was murdered by a Muslim fanatic later. Dr Ansari said in 1927 in the Unity Conference in Calcutta that in the days of Non co-operation in Delhi we succeeded in our endeavours to reduce cow sacrifice from 700 to 3 or 4.<sup>2</sup> Indeed it has been demonstrated that if the leaders so choose they can stop music before mosque and cow slaughter. The political issue in the communal conflict is of course the question of power and privilege to be enjoyed

<sup>1</sup> Mohammad Noman *Muslim India* p 250

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid* p 252.

by the communities in the administration. Here the British game finds scope for full play. Indeed, if the Muslim leaders were politically inclined to be friendly to the Hindu leaders rather than to the British there would have been no communal riots. The ruling power welcomes, and as we have seen, even works to bring about a difference in the communities and a suspicion in the Muslim mind as regards the intentions of the majority community. Thus its game is to use one community as a counterpoise against the other. But it would be wrong to say that the riots are always engineered by the third power. Indeed they may have been engineered directly by the bureaucracy sometime or other, especially when there is a struggle going on against the Government, but there is hardly any reason to suppose that communal riots are the fixed policy of the British as is the policy of counterpoise. But one follows from the other and no solution of the so-called religious quarrel is possible unless the solution of the political side of the problem is reached. On two occasions, such a political unity was possible and on both occasions it was based on action and it postulated a struggle. The Lucknow Pact in 1916 envisaged a constitutional agitation against the British if the Congress-League scheme was not accepted and a Hindu-Muslim unity was forged again in 1919 and 1920 to launch the Khilafat and Non-co-operation movements against the same power. Communal clashes evaporated in such an atmosphere of political unity brought about by a dynamic programme.

## CHAPTER V

### FROM THE DELHI PROPOSALS TO THE 14 POINTS

1927—1929

A determined attempt to attack both sides of the communal problem religious and political referred to in the last chapter was made by Mr Srinivas Iyengar (Congress President Gauhati session 1926) in the year 1927. The Hindu and Muslim leaders met at Delhi and anxiously discussed the question of the revision of the Constitution in the early part of this year. The Hindu leaders having already decided in favour of joint electorate with the reservation of the seats for the Muslims either on the basis of the Lucknow Pact or of the existing population of each province <sup>1</sup> the Mussalman leaders met on the 20th of March 1927 at the initiative and under the chairmanship of Mr Jinnah and were unanimously resolved that the Muslims should accept a settlement on the basis of the certain proposals adopted by them so far as the representation in the various legislatures and in various schemes of constitution is concerned. The most important point about these proposals is the acceptance by the Muslims of a joint electorate subject to certain conditions which are (1) Sind was to be made into a separate province (2) N.W.F.P. and Baluchistan were to be treated on the same footing as the other provinces (3) In the Punjab and Bengal the proportion of representation was to be in accordance with the population and (4) In the Central Legislature Muslim representation was not to be less than one-third. The formula was however subject to the ratification by the All India Muslim League. Indeed the Delhi proposals may be said to be the best solution possible under the circumstances and Mr Jinnah deserved as indeed he got immense praise for them. The Congress Working Committee met in Bombay in May and evolved a formula dealing with the Hindu Muslim problem which in effect accepted the proposals of Mr

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid* p 244

*Ibid* p 244

Jinnah's Delhi Conference. The A.I.C.C. approved of the formula which "contemplated joint electorates, with reservation of seats on the basis of population in the Provinces, and, in the Central Legislature, provided reciprocal concessions in favour of minorities, including Sikhs in the Punjab, by mutual agreement so as to give them weighted representation and maintain the same proportions in the Central Legislature as well"<sup>1</sup> The question of cow-killing and music before mosque was also discussed in a Unity Conference at Calcutta and thanks to Mr Srinivas Iyengar and particularly to Dr Ansari's pleading, satisfactorily settled<sup>2</sup> The credit for this formula and understanding goes to Mr Srinivas Iyengar and to Mr Jinnah who was responsible for the Delhi proposals But the proposal for a joint electorate produced a rift in the Muslim League and "the Punjab Muslim League denounced the Delhi proposals".<sup>3</sup> In the meantime, the personnel of the Simon Commission was announced and among other things the refusal to include any Indian in the Commission made the Congress and the League under Mr. Jinnah decide to boycott it But the British were not idle They were whipping up the reactionary Muslim leaders who lent themselves to British use and who had "denounced the Delhi proposals" of joint electorate and who now decided to welcome the Commission Sir Mohammad Shafee, the Muslim leader in the Punjab, who was a yesman of the Government led the group and presided over a rival session of the League at Lahore while the accredited session of 1927 met under the presidency of Mr M Yakub<sup>4</sup> and passed a resolution boycotting the Simon Commission It further accepted the challenge of Lord Birkenhead to produce an agreed constitution and appointed a Committee to take up with the Congress and other organizations of the country the work of drafting the constitution Mr Jinnah was really the soul of this session who said, "Simon Commission is the butchery of our soul" A glimpse into the mind of the British ruling authority at the time will not be out of place here

<sup>1</sup> Pattabhi Sitaramayya *History of the Congress*, p 529

<sup>2</sup> Mohammad Noman *Muslim India*, pp 252-253

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p 249

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p 262

Lord Birkenhead the Secretary of State for India wrote at about this time to the Viceroy, Lord Irwin

'I should advise Simon to see at all stages all people who are not kowtowing the Commission particularly Muslims and depressed classes I should widely advertise all his interviews with representative Muslims The whole policy is now obvious *It is to terrify the immense Hindu population by the apprehension that the Commission is being got hold of by the Muslims and may present a report altogether destructive of the Hindu position thereby securing solid Muslim support and leaving Jinnah high and dry* <sup>1</sup> (Italics ours)

The policy of counterpoise could hardly have been made more clear To counter nationalist Mr Jinnah it must be noted in this connection communalist Sir Mohammad Shafee was propped up by the British as H H the Aga Khan had formerly been held up While the British were busy working up opposition to Congress League stand with the help of Sir Mohammad Shafee and other allies the Congress met at Madras under the presidency of Dr Ansari and passed a resolution directing its executive to convene an All India All Parties Conference with a view to draw up a constitution for India acceptable to all parties A special Convention was to be held before which the drafted constitution should be placed for approval

But the end of 1928 belied all the great expectations held towards the end of 1927 The All Parties Conference appointed in May 1928 a Committee with Pandit Motilal Nehru as its Chairman to draft a constitution before 1st July 1928 The representative of the Muslim League attended and co-operated in its earlier sittings with the All Parties Conference But presently the Muslim League changed its mind and the Council of the League met and expressed its disapproval of the resolutions of the All Parties Conference and decided not to take part in the discussion <sup>2</sup> of this Conference This resolution of the Muslim League Council admits Mohammad Noman created a difficulty for the

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Quotation borrowed by Mehta & Patwardhan *op cit* p 77 from  
 K. B. Krishna's *The Problem of Minorities*  
 Mohammad Noman *Muslim India* p 272.

(All-Parties) Conference”<sup>1</sup> The reason for such a sudden change in the attitude of the League has been stated to be the fact that “*some of the intelligent people in the Muslim League* had already noticed the changed attitude of the members of the Congress who in their heart of hearts were happy to see divisions and rift in the Muslim League”<sup>2</sup> (Italics ours) We have seen that the Delhi proposals and the Simon Commission caused a rift in the League, the reactionary elements were led by Sir Mohammad Shafee and the nationalist elements by Mr Jinnah It became clear after sometime that Mr Jinnah who took the initiative in formulating the Delhi proposals and who brought the League in line with the Congress in the matter of boycotting the Simon Commission, began to find his position gradually weaker in the League The advocates of Anglo-Muslim alliance were gaining ground It was felt that against such a background, the labour of the All-Parties Conference, particularly in the matter of communal settlement had little prospect of coming to any satisfactory conclusion Mr Jinnah left for England on May 5, 1928 The Nehru Committee submitted its report in July and we are concerned here with its communal portion The Committee thought that communal problem resolved itself into “the question of electorates, the reservation of seats, the separation of Sind, and the form of Government in the N W F P and Baluchistan”<sup>3</sup> It discarded separate electorates, agreed to place N W F P and Baluchistan on the same status as other provinces The question of Sind remained, however, a bone of contention In the Muslim minority provinces the Committee recommended reservation of seats in proportion to their population and the same principle was upheld for the Centre so that Muslims whose number is a little less than one-fourth of the entire population of India were given one-fourth of the Central seats The League session was held in Calcutta under the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, that ardent nationalist who had boycotted the Simon Commission and whose house had been surrounded with a cordon of Police lest he might join the demonstration against the Simon Commission The other

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p 271

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p 271

<sup>3</sup> Nehru Committee Report (2nd edition) p 30

section of the League which was committed to separate electorates and which welcomed the Simon Commission met at Delhi in what they called the All Parties Muslim Conference under H H the Aga Khan as the President

The All Parties Convention met in Calcutta Already the divergence between the views with regard to the Nehru Committee Report of some Muslim Leaders in the Jinnah camp of the League had been getting marked Mr Jinnah who had just (26th October 1928) come from England and who had ever since he arrived been falling foul of the Nehru Report began to oppose it <sup>1</sup> When he left for England in May he had stood by joint electorate and the Delhi proposals which had been sponsored by him The five months' stay in London however made a tremendous difference in his political principles He dropped his long advocacy of joint electorate on his return and became wedded to separate electorates No satisfactory solution of this *volte face* and of the riddle of his subsequent politics up to this day can be offered if this five months stay in London were left out of account In the All Parties Convention he moved several amendments of which only two of minor importance were passed Mr Jinnah demanded among other things one-third of the Central seats reservation of seats for Muslims on population basis in Bengal and the Punjab separation of Sind provinces to have residuary powers The Convention failed to agree and ended in failure Mr Jinnah who had presided over the Calcutta session of the League in the absence of Maharaja of Mahmudabad adjourned the sessions to some time 'before the end of May 1929' <sup>2</sup> Muslim political opinion vis a vis the Nehru Report was very much divided at this time There were roughly four groups We have already referred to the Shafee group In the Jinnah League itself there was one led by men like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Mr Sherwani who gave full support to the Nehru Report The third group was represented by Mr Jinnah himself and the fourth by those who met at Delhi Conference under H H The Aga Khan The Delhi Conference under the

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Pattabhi Sitaramayya *History of the Congress* p 363  
 Mohammad Noman *Muslim India* p 281  
*Ibid* p 282

Aga Khan was uncompromising in its opposition to the Nehru Report and Mr Jinnah "on behalf of the League, invited the members of Delhi Conference to the meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League."<sup>1</sup> The two sections met and Mr Jinnah pointed out that there was a large unanimity between the two, that "in substance there was very little difference between the resolutions of Delhi Conference and that of the Calcutta session of the League."<sup>2</sup> Finally, the meeting authorised Mr. Jinnah "to negotiate with the representatives of the various groups of League regarding the form which the Muslim demands should take and to place an agreed formula before the League session."<sup>3</sup> Thus it appeared, the two sections of the League reached unanimity and were united for the time being. Delhi was agreed upon to be the venue of the Special Session of the League. On the eve of this session, Mr Jinnah circulated among the members a brief history of the controversy on the communal settlement since 1924 and a draft of a resolution which contained all the provisions which afterwards became famous as the 14 points of Mr Jinnah. They are —

- (1) The form of the future constitution should be federal with the residuary powers vested in the provinces
- (2) A uniform measure of autonomy shall be granted to all provinces
- (3) All legislatures in the country and other elected bodies shall be constituted on the definite principle of adequate and effective representation of minorities in every Province without reducing the majority in any Province to a minority or even equality
- (4) In the Central Legislature, Mussalman representation shall not be less than one-third
- (5) Representation of communal groups shall continue to be by means of separate electorates as at present provided it shall be open to any community, at any time, to abandon its separate electorate in favour of joint electorate

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p 283

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p 283

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p 283



- (6) Any territorial redistribution that might at any time be necessary shall not, in any way, affect the Muslim majority in the Punjab, Bengal and N.W.F. Province
- (7) Full religious liberty i.e. liberty of belief worship and observance propaganda association and education shall be guaranteed to all communities
- (8) No bill or resolution or any part thereof shall be passed in any legislature or any other elected body if three-fourths of the members of any community in that particular body oppose such a bill resolution or part thereof on the ground that it would be injurious to the interests of that community or in the alternative such other method is devised as may be found feasible and practicable to deal with such cases
- (9) Sind should be separated from the Bombay Presidency
- (10) Reforms should be introduced in the N.W.F. Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces
- (11) Provision should be made in the constitution giving Muslims an adequate share along with the other Indians in all the services of the State and in local self governing bodies having due regard to the requirements of efficiency
- (12) The constitution should embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Muslim culture and for the protection and promotion of Muslim education language religion personal laws and Muslim charitable institutions and for their due share in the grants in aid given by the State and by local self governing bodies
- (13) No cabinet either Central or Provincial should be formed without there being a proportion of at least one-third Muslim Ministers
- (14) No change shall be made in the constitution by the Central Legislature except with the concurrence of the States constituting the Indian Federation

It may be said in passing that the Government of India Act, 1935 read together with the Instrument of Instructions conceded practically all these points except number 8.

The special session of the League at Delhi was marred by conflicts over these provisions which were opposed to the Nehru Report, and had to be adjourned while the nationalist Muslims under Maulana Abul Kalam Azad left the League and formed the Nationalist Muslim Party<sup>1</sup>. Mr. Jinnah chose to remain in the League and thenceforward worked for the leadership of this reactionary element in Muslim politics. As Mohammad Noman says, "Another effect which the various currents of the Indian movements produced was the meeting of Mr. Jinnah and Sir Mohammed Shafiee whose differences had long been a painful reading, and a great unity was attained by this re-union at a very critical time in the history of the Mussalmans"<sup>2</sup>. It is indeed not Sir Mohammed Shafiee who yielded to Mr. Jinnah but the latter who yielded to the former. The nationalist Muslims having left the League in March 1929, the League became completely alienated from the Congress and found itself free to pursue its separatist, communal policy unhampered by any protests or vacillations in its own ranks.

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<sup>1</sup> Mehta & Patwardhan *The Communal Triangle in India*, p. 40

<sup>2</sup> Mohammad Noman *Muslim India*, p. 305

## CHAPTER VI

### THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCES

1930—1932

The years 1930 1932 saw the three Round Table Conferences and the Civil Disobedience Movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi. In the first Round Table Conference which met in London on the 12th November 1930 the Congress refused to participate. Maulana Mohamad Ali, Mr Jinnah and Sir Mohammed Shafee were invited and they attended the Conference where the communal question loomed large.

1930 session of the League was held at Allahabad under the presidency of Dr Sir Mohammed Iqbal. The attendance which was less than seventy five was not enough to make up the quorum <sup>1</sup>. It was at this session that the president Dr Iqbal set forth his ideal of Pakistan.

It was felt by all parties including the British in the first Round Table Conference that the absence of the Congress from it rendered it somewhat unreal. On January 19th 1931 the first Round Table Conference ended and the Conference was adjourned *sine die*. The Prime Minister assured that steps would be taken to enlist the co-operation of those sections of public opinion which had held aloof from the Conference. Accordingly the Viceroy, Lord Irwin opened negotiations with Mahatma Gandhi and an understanding was eventually arrived at between them. Congress agreed to be represented at the second Round Table Conference and nominated Mahatma Gandhi as its sole representative. Even before he sailed for England he tried to solve the communal problem and said that if the Muslims made a united demand he would accept it. But the nationalist Muslims opposed the reactionary nature of the demands of the communalist Muslims. Netaji Subhas Bose in his *Indian Struggle* tells an incident which happened about this time. Mahatmajī asked Netaji Bose if the latter

"had any objection to separate electorates since it could be argued that in the absence of the third party the different communities would live and work in concord To this I replied that separate electorates were against the fundamental principle of Nationalism and that I felt so strongly on the subject that even Swaraj on the basis of separate electorates was in my opinion not worth having" At that time, some nationalist Muslims including Dr Ansari and Mr Sherwani came to see Mahatmaji who asked them the same question to which they replied that "if for any reason the Mahatma gave up the demand for a common electorate for both Hindus and Moslems and accepted the demand of the reactionaries for a separate electorate for each community, they would oppose the reactionary Moslems and also the Mahatma because they were convinced that separate electorates were bad not only for the country as a whole, but also for the different communities"<sup>1</sup>

It has been pointed out by many that it was a great pity that Mahatmaji went to the Conference alone from the Congress Both the reactionary Muslims and the British Government, however, felt happy over this What is significant was that though Lord Irwin was committed to the offer of invitation being sent to Dr Ansari as well, as demanded by the Congress, the Government failed to nominate Dr Ansari and the Viceroy Lord Willingdon "pleaded that the *Mussalman delegates were opposed to Dr Ansari's delegation*"<sup>2</sup> (Italics ours) It was indeed against the interests of the communalist Muslims and Imperialist Britain to let Dr Ansari "with his unchallengeable position in the country and a vast following and nationalistic ideals, and with outspoken and vehement resistance to communalism"<sup>3</sup> attend the Round Table Conference The nationalist Muslim, Sir Ali Imam was invited but "for reasons best known to himself he remained a more or less silent member"<sup>4</sup> in the Conference and did nothing to counter the activities of the reactionary Muslim communalists and the British Imperialists The second Round Table Conference ended without, as Mahatma Gandhi

<sup>1</sup> Subhas C Bose *The Indian Struggle*, p 243

<sup>2</sup> Pattabhi Sitaramaya *History of the Congress*, p 817

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid* p 817

<sup>4</sup> C Y Chintamani *Indian Politics since the Mutiny*, p 129

confessed arriving at 'an agreed solution of the communal question through informal conversations among and with the representatives of the different groups. Meanwhile the next session of the League was held in a private house in Delhi presided over by Sir Mohd Zafarullah Khan and attended by about one hundred members. The League demanded definite announcement regarding the future safeguards for the Mussalmans and further demanded reforms in Frontier which was a point of honour for them the separation of Sind and the Provincial Autonomy <sup>1</sup>

It may be mentioned here that though the League politics was at a very low ebb particularly in contrast with the Nationalist Muslim Conference the former enjoyed a special 'weightage' in the form of British favour. Only the prestige thrust by the ruling Power on the weak League kept it going in these its lean days. The nationalist Muslims had joined the Civil Disobedience movement in 1930 while the League scrupulously stayed away from it.

After the publication of the Communal Award in August 1932 and following the Poona Pact Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya held a Unity Conference at Allahabad to try once again to settle the communal problem. The Nehru Committee gave one-fourth of the entire elected seats in the centre to the Muslims, in accordance with their strength of population but Mr Jinnah's demand was to have one-third of the total seats. Two of the many points amicably settled in the Unity Conference were that 'in the Central Legislature the Muslims of British India should have 32 per cent of representation and secondly that Sind should be constituted a governor's province subject to a number of safeguards for the Hindu minority and without a subvention from the central revenues' <sup>2</sup>. It was indeed a great concession towards meeting Mr Jinnah's demands and the Muslims were naturally satisfied. This was a great disappointment for the British authorities who sought to outbid the Hindus and when the Committee of the Conference were in session at Calcutta Sir Samuel Hoare (then Secretary of State for India) publicly announced in London that His Majesty's Government had decided that

Mohammad Noman *Muslim India* pp 315-316.

C Y Chintamani *Indian Politics since the Mutiny* p 134

the Muslim representation in the central legislature should be 33-1/3 per cent and that Sind should be a separate province *with a subvention from the Central revenues*, and (it may be added) *without any safeguards for the Hindus*”<sup>1</sup> (Italics ours) No wonder that the Committee immediately broke up, for the Muslim communalists had no further use for it when they found higher bidders in the market

## CHAPTER VII

### MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAH

The year 1933 found the weak League divided again and two alternative sessions were held one at Howrah under the presidentship of Mian Abdul Aziz and another at Delhi under the presidentship of Hafiz Hidayat Husain <sup>1</sup> In 1934 however the split was made up both sections met at Delhi and elected Mr Jinnah as the President who had since the first Round Table Conference been in London and intending to practise there in the Bar Mr Jinnah accordingly came back to India in 1934 Since then gradually Mr Jinnah rallied the Muslims round him in the League and gave new life to it which since the departure of the nationalist Muslims from it in 1929 lost what ever life had been put into it first in its early days by British patronage and next by its nationalist capture in 1913 The irony of the whole thing is that since 1934, the League has gathered strength as a highly reactionary force in Indian Politics under the same Mr Jinnah who was prevailed upon to join the League in 1913 when League had accepted self government as its goal on the express understanding that he would leave the League if its policy went against the Congress and against the larger interests of India A staunch Congressman till the Congress adopted non violence and direct action in its programme under Mahatma Gandhi an able debator and dialectician a Muslim nationalist leader above all communal and sectional politics Mr Jinnah had been marked out to be the leader of the Congress Mr Edwin Montagu in his *Indian Diary* praises Mr Jinnah's abilities in generous terms He refers to other great leaders also and bestows ungrudging praise on some of them but few got more ready and unqualified admiration from him as the clever Jinnah He considered it an outrage that such a man should have no chance of running the affairs of his own country" He refers his

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Mohammad Noman *Muslim India* p 320  
Edwin S Montagu *An Indian Diary* p 58.

talk with Mr. Walker, a *Manchester Guardian* Correspondent who came out to India to study and report on the Indian situation. Mr. Walker was of opinion that "in Bombay there was only one man—Jinnah. At the root of Jinnah's activities is ambition. He believes that when Mrs. Besant and Tilak have disappeared he will be the leader." <sup>1</sup> That was in 1917. Where was the coming "leader" of the Congress when Tilak died and Mrs. Besant "disappeared" from the scene almost as suddenly as she had emerged? He "dropped out of the Congress" <sup>2</sup> after Calcutta Special Congress in 1920. For a time he was nowhere in the picture; then he plunged himself into League politics and often, consistent with his rôle in the Lucknow Pact of 1916, tried to bring the League and the Congress together. But nothing happened to satisfy the "ambition" of Mr. Jinnah who was still far from being the uncrowned king of any organization in the country or of any section of the nation. Perhaps by 1930, Mr. Jinnah admitted to himself that he had been a failure. He did not dominate the Round Table Conference even as a League Muslim. Indeed he was not even invited in its later sessions. He was not the first nor the most prominent with Maulana Mohamad Ali and Sir Mohammed Shafee as fellow delegates in the first Round Table Conference. He did not succeed in being the Congress leader after the death of Tilak because he was too much of an aristocrat in an organization which suddenly, almost overnight, developed a programme of mass contact and of mass struggle and began to talk in a language that was unfamiliar to him. Of him Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has said, "he felt completely out of his element in the Khadi-clad crowd demanding speeches in Hindustani. The enthusiasm of the people outside struck him as mob-hysteria. There was as much difference between him and the Indian masses as between Savile Row and Bond Street and the Indian village with its mud huts. He suggested once privately that *only matriculates should be taken into the Congress*" <sup>3</sup> (Italics ours).

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p. 67

<sup>2</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru *An Autobiography*, p. 67

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 67-68



If he could not succeed in the Congress because of its growing revolutionary character why could he not succeed in the League in the twenties? Mr Humayun Kabir suggests a reason. Describing Muslim politics in about 1932 when the League's fortunes were at their lowest he refers to Mr Jinnah's decision to retire from Indian politics and devote himself to legal practice in England. And then happened one of those sudden transformations which make prophecies in the political sphere such a dangerous pastime. Faced with political extinction the League was through a series of unforeseen events lifted to a position of eminence and power it had never occupied before. There was a sudden epidemic of deaths among Muslim leaders of an All India stature. In 1928 the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan had removed one of the most respected and powerful of the Moslem leaders of the Congress. The death of Maulana Muhammad Ali was another great loss. Soon after followed the death of Dr Ansari perhaps the strongest bulwark of Moslem nationalism against the forces of reaction.

The moderate group lost in quick succession Sir Mohammad Shafee and Sir Fazli Hussain the ablest and best known leaders belonging to the group of vested interests'<sup>1</sup>

The dearth of living able Muslims is certainly one of the reasons of Mr Jinnah's unique position in Indian politics since 1936. Another reason as we shall presently see, is certainly the unwisdom of the Congress in dealing arrogantly at a psychological moment with the League and Mr Jinnah. But one great reason must be the change in his own political conscience in 1928 while in London which made it possible for the British to bestow on him their ungrudging patronage. The one time Ambassador of the Hindu Muslim unity thrives now on Hindu Muslim differences and conflicts and the farther he succeeds in taking the League away from the Congress and nationalism the greater grows the strength of the alliance between him and the British who strengthen Mr Jinnah's hands by improving the narrow immediate material prospects and increasing the undemocratic privileges of the Muslim middle class at the expense of the interests of the Hindu middle class and sometimes of the growth of healthy

nationalism. Thus the growth of the Muslim middle class from strength to strength has been made conditional and consequential upon its antagonism to the Hindus and so long as League politics can be confined to this middle class plane, and so long as British Imperial interests will coincide with Muslim communal politics, Mr Jinnah's leadership is secure. Pakistan, as we shall see, is not based on facts or principles. But it has all the romance of a battle cry and all the potentialities of a crusade. It is pregnant, however, with forces which, if unleashed, may trample under foot and destroy, the great leader who is playing with the passions of the multitude. If the bluff is not called soon, the unreason and fanaticism which are the chief strength behind the growth of the Pakistan movement may yet be too strong for Mr Jinnah's capacity for pulling the brake in time and the first victim of the surging onrush may yet be Mr Jinnah himself. But that will be poor consolation for a country in the grips of a civil war. Mr Jinnah may be hoping, however, that the evil day of the civil war may not come at all, for are not the British here to prevent it and—even if it comes, to stop it? Anyhow, there is no doubt that Mr Jinnah is playing with fire which belying all his calculations and hopes may yet burn his own fingers and cause incalculable disaster to the country.

## CHAPTER VIII

## THE LAST PHASE

1934—1940

On his election to the presidentship of the League in 1934 Mr Jinnah came back to India and made a definite attempt to revive the League. Nationalist Muslim politicians outside the League had joined the Civil Disobedience movement and at its end found themselves at a disadvantage with the reactionary Muslims thanks to the introduction of the Communal Award. The interest of the Muslim middle class lay still in being loyal to the British in return for their patronage and the Communal Award gave them an idea as to which side the Muslim Middle class bread was still buttered. It is not surprising that League politics grew in strength among and became popular to the Muslim middle class as it veered round reaction. Among the masses however thanks to the Ahrar Party of the Punjab and the Praja Party in Bengal there was a different story to tell. They sometimes went even further than the Congress and formulated a militant political programme by combining economic grievances with religious passion.

The Muslim League thought it was advisable to accept the Communal Award even with its obvious defects. Early in 1935 negotiations went on for sometime between the Congress President Babu Rajendra Prasad and Mr Jinnah for an agreed settlement between the communities to replace the Communal Award. But they failed. Mr Jinnah called the session of the Muslim League in April 1936 at Bombay under the presidentship of Sir Wazir Hasan who in his presidential address said 'It should always be borne in mind that India is a continent. It should further be borne in mind that the Hindus and the Mussalmans inhabiting this vast continent are not two communities but should be considered two nations in many respects'.<sup>1</sup> It was in this session that the League decided

to fight the elections in pursuance of its resolution agreeing to utilise the latter part of the Government of India Act, 1935 viz, provincial autonomy for what it was worth. The Bombay session, however, rejected the Federal part of the 1935 Act

In the 1936-37 elections, the League sought the help of the *Jamiat-Ul-Ulema* with the result that it did not fare badly in the U P. But in Bengal and the Punjab the League suffered a heavy defeat and of Muslim India "only four per cent voted for Mr Jinnah and his League"<sup>1</sup>

In contrast, however, the success of the Unionists in the Punjab, the Praja Party in Bengal and of the Congress almost everywhere in the non-Mohammadan constituencies had been tremendous. It must be noted as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru frankly admitted that "only in regard to the Muslim seats did we (i.e., the Congress) lack success"<sup>2</sup> The Congress in its Working Committee meeting on 7th July, 1937 permitted Congressmen to accept office consequent on the assurance given by the Viceroy with regard to the exercise of the special Powers vested in the Governor and accordingly, in the six Congress majority provinces, Congressmen formed cabinets. The Muslim League along with other non-Congress groups in the Assemblies showed willingness to share office with the Congress in coalition cabinets. The Congress, however, refused to form coalition cabinets even though "the political situation was favourable for coalition cabinets" and "the Instrument of Instructions to the Governor can be interpreted to favour the formation of a coalition cabinet."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, in the United Provinces, Muslim League Parliamentary Board offered to co-operate with the Congress on the basis of the latter's Wardah programme thus accepting "the Congress programme in its entirety"<sup>4</sup> But Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's terms for accepting co-operation from the League included *inter alia* the following —

(1) The Muslim League group in the U P Assembly must cease to function as a separate group, (2) the League

<sup>1</sup> Humayun Kabir *Moslem swing to Nationalism*, published in *Hindusthan Standard*, Calcutta, Thursday, Oct 16, '45 Late City edition

<sup>2</sup> Mohammad Noman *Muslim India*, p 342

<sup>3</sup> Sir B P Sinha Roy *Parliamentary Government in India*, p 216

<sup>4</sup> Mohammad Noman *Muslim India*, p 342

members must join the Congress party (3) League Parliamentary Board in U P must be dissolved One need not be surprised that the League did not take kindly to the virtual rejection of its offer of co operation. For the conditions of Maulana Azad must be considered impossible by every organization if it does not want to liquidate itself The Congress decision of a Muslim mass contact campaign, though legitimate for an organization which is non-communal and national was meant to bypass the League which aimed at becoming the only representative organization of the Muslims and therefore only added to the anger of the League Further some members of the League deserted it to join Congress cabinets after signing Congress pledge and this incensed Mr Jinnah so much that he remarked with reference to the renegades that the degree of their reward is the extent of their perfidy <sup>1</sup> Such deserters were challenged by the League to resign and seek re-election One of them Mr Hafiz Muhammad Ibrahim who had left the League and joined the Congress cabinet accepted the challenge resigned his seat sought re-election defeated his League rival by 7 271 votes to 2 202 and got re-elected

One is not surprised that in the Lucknow session of the League held in October 1937 the tone of Mr Jinnah should be bitter Said he —

‘The present leadership of the Congress especially during the last ten years has been responsible for alienating the Mussalmans of India more and more by pursuing a policy which is exclusively Hindu and since they have formed governments in six provinces where they are in majority they have by their words deeds and programme shown that the Mussalmans cannot expect any justice or fair play at their hands On the very threshold of what little power and responsibility is given the majority community have clearly shown their hand that Hindustan is for the Hindus ”

It is evident that Mr Jinnah did not care to take account of the fact that Congress was loath to form coalition

cabinets in the beginning with any group including even such nationalist groups as the Praja party in Bengal. Congress policy was directed *not particularly* against the Muslim League. But Mr Jinnah chose to see in the Congress refusal a Hindu domination of Muslims. It must be said, however, that there was something inconsistent in the Congress attitude too. The Congress is of course entitled to view the League as a reactionary organization and as such, to give it no support. Pandit Nehru's proposal for Muslim mass contact and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's terms to U P Muslim Parliamentary Board point to the Congress conviction that the League does not represent Muslim masses and that it is a reactionary organization. If so, it is only consistent to shun the League and try to bring the Muslim masses into the Congress. But what makes the Congress position look awkward was to let at the same time its successive Presidents continue talks of unity with Mr Jinnah right through 1937 and 1938. Mr Jinnah was at least consistent and could say on his side that the League offered to co-operate in the act of government with the Congress which, however, spurned that offer. If the Congress wanted to placate the League, the best moment for doing it was the year 1937 when the Congress was strong and accepted office and when the League was weak and willing to co-operate. "In politics", observed Mr Jinnah wisely "good will and love and affection and regard can only be demonstrated when you are strong." But the Congress did not know this wisdom at the moment of its victory. If it had thought it right to come to terms with the League as indeed it had, for it would not have otherwise let its successive Presidents continue unity talks with the League President, that moment came when the Congress accepted office and the League came more than half the way to co-operate.

The wisdom that the Congress could not show, was shown by Mr Jinnah in 1937 immediately before the Lucknow session when he signed the Jinnah-Sikander Pact and as a result Muslim members of the Unionist Party joined the League. Mr Fazlul Huq, the Praja Party leader in Bengal who had appealed in vain to Mr Sarat Chandra Bose, leader of the Congress Party in the Assembly to form

a Congress Praja Coalition in Bengal immediately after the elections formed on the latter's refusal because of Congress policy at the time a Praja League coalition cabinet and grew increasingly League-minded as a result of Congress opposition and attempt to overthrow his cabinet. Indeed the support of Mr Huq in Bengal and Sir Sikander Hyat Khan in the Punjab strengthened the League tremendously. At least Mr Huq could be prevented from joining the League if the Congress policy in Bengal had been directed wisely. The Congress leaders did not see that Bengal held the key to the solution of the All India communal problem. At any rate a Congress Praja coalition would have isolated the League made it still more weak and nipped Pakistan in the bud. The mistake was realised but too late. The mischief of making Bengal League and communally minded had been done already. Under a Congress Praja combination the Muslim community would not have secured fewer advantages than it actually did under the League but in the former case Muslim communal fanaticism would not have been considered a sure qualification for and a guarantee of success in the matter of getting more and more jobs and advantages.

The Lucknow session of the League is important for another reason. In this session the League changed its creed from self government to full independence in the form of federation of free democratic States in which full safeguards for Mussalmans and other minorities will be secured.<sup>1</sup>

On 17th and 18th April 1938 The League met in a special session in Calcutta where a committee was appointed under the Raja Saheb of Pimpore to enquire into the hardship ill treatment and injustice that is meted out to Mussalmans in the various Congress provinces. The League took strong exception to the singing of *Vande Mataram* in the Assemblies the introduction of the Wardah scheme of basic education and the introduction of Hindu thanas in Madras. It even complained of atrocities committed on the Muslims in Congress provinces. The Pimpore Report gave lurid accounts of atrocities charges and grievances were catalogued at an impressive length but the

## THE LAST PHASE

Report failed to "make out a case sufficiently strong to discredit the Congress Ministries"<sup>1</sup> Dr Rajendra Prasad, Congress President, 1939, informed Mr. Jinnah that the charges were unfounded and only one-sided report was made and that the governments concerned had enquired into the charges and found them baseless. He even made a counter offer that the Congress was prepared to get the allegations enquired into by the Chief Justice of the Federal Court of India, Sir Maurice Gwyer, or by a person of similar standing. But Mr Jinnah did not accept the offer. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Chairman of the Congress Parliamentary Committee in his statement on 10th December, 1939, stated that the "Congress Chief Ministers invited the Governors to intervene if their action in regard to the minorities was not correct and that Governors considered Mr Jinnah's charges as 'unwarranted' "<sup>2</sup>

While the Congress provinces were charged with oppression of Muslim minorities, the League provinces were not praised for their good government or *treatment of minorities*. Indeed, Bengal presented a bad example of shameless encouragement given to communal fanaticism. High percentage of Muslim appointments in public services irrespective of worth is only the least of the grievances of the Hindu minority. All hopes of communal peace in the province and of honesty and efficient administration for years to come have been dashed on the ground. The League cabinet showed by their action that their time was too short and Muslim communal domination of the province must be ensured now or never. The advantages the League might have taken of the Provincial Autonomy to improve the conditions of the masses of Muslim masses, were neglected in their eagerness to ensure the present and to ensure for the future, a Muslim middle class domination of the province. The masses of the province would have every reason to thank the League if the masses of the province who form the bulk of the population had benefited by the Muslim League cabinet.

The League's communal fanaticism did not go unchallenged in its own ranks. Sir Wazir I



India's constitution which may prove not only highly detrimental to the interests of the Mussalmans but may be disastrous to them. The Viceroy in his letter to Mr Jinnah on April 19 sought to assure the latter by referring to the Secretary of State's speech in the House of Lords on April 18 which stated *inter alia*, The undertaking given by His Majesty's Government to examine the constitutional field in consultation with representatives of all parties and interests in India connotes not dictation but negotiation. Admittedly a substantial measure of agreement amongst the communities in India is essential. I cannot believe that any Government or Parliament in this country would attempt to impose by force upon for example 80 million Muslim subjects of His Majesty in India a form of constitution under which they would not live peacefully and contentedly.<sup>1</sup>

The League Working Committee though professing not to have been wholly satisfied with this clarification, left the provinces where the League had a dominant voice free to co-operate with the British Government. Indeed as Messrs Mehta and Patwardhan have observed the striking resemblance between the Viceroy Jinnah correspondence in 1939-40 and the reply of Lord Minto to the Simla deputation in 1906 can hardly pass unnoticed. Though formally and technically the League did not co-operate with the War efforts in effect through the League ministries it gave all the help of which it was capable to the British war efforts in India.

Armed practically with the assurance that Britain will not be committed to any constitution making proposal without the approval and consent of the League it met at Lahore in March 1940 and passed its Pakistan resolution. Ever since then the communal problem of India has become a problem of a United India versus a divided and vivisectioned India. The Pakistan resolution set in motion the nationalist elements among Muslims who met at Delhi on April 27 under the presidentship of Khan Bahadur Allah Bakhsh then Premier of Sind. He denounced the Pakistan

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid* pp 250-251

<sup>2</sup> Mehta & Patwardhan *The Communal Triangle in India* p 46—foot note

resolution and the two-nation theory it propounded "A majority of the 90 million Indian Muslims who are descendants of the earlier inhabitants of India", said he, "are in no sense other than sons of the soil" Religious conversion, he contended, did not give separate nationality He contested the Muslim League claim to be the sole representative of the Indian Mussalmans and criticised Pakistan as a scheme which would result in putting the Muslims in an *'isolation quarantine'*

Ever since March, 1940, the pattern of communal politics has been set up by the Pakistan resolution This resolution and the claims of the League as the sole representative body of the Muslims as also the reactionary character of the League have been responsible for strengthening the various nationalist elements among the Muslims A trial of strength between the League and the nationalist Muslims is envisaged in the near future and with the issue of this conflict, the solution of India's constitutional problem is bound to be mixed up to a large extent.

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zones (*italics ours*) was just as sound an undertaking as though it would be a country with all of its states in one block' His silence later on the point of the 'corridor' coupled with the sentence quoted above implies possibly that he has given up the idea of the corridor

## CHAPTER X

### THE CASE FOR PAKISTAN

Though there had been rather loose talk during the last decade, about Muslims of India constituting a nation, a definite claim that they are a separate nation distinguished from other communities in the land, must date from about 1940. The claim has been categorically set forth in the Lahore session of the Muslim League in 1940 where the Pakistan resolution was passed "The greatest harm done to the Mussalmans", says Mohammad Noman, "was that they were termed as minority, but it was in Lahore that the Muslim League expressed its strong disapproval and proclaimed to the world that they were a nation"<sup>1</sup> It has been extremely difficult and has proved hitherto impossible to get Mr Jinnah, the League President to define *clearly* what he means by a nation so that by applying his tests of nationhood, Indian Muslims may be proved to constitute a separate nation from non-Muslim citizens of India. Indeed, the whole case for Pakistan has been made to rest on the theory that Muslims in India constitute a separate nation. Therefore, the matter of establishing this theory is of paramount importance and the best efforts of the protagonists and supporters of Pakistan have gone towards a definition and substantiation of the claim that Muslims in India are a separate nation from the Non-Muslim inhabitants of India. In his presidential speech at Lahore, Mr Jinnah said, "Muslims are a nation according to any definition of a nation", and in support of his contention, he said, ~

"It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real nature of Islam and Hinduism. They are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are, in fact, different and distinct social orders and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality, and this misconception of one Indian nation has gone

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<sup>1</sup> Mohammad Noman *Muslim India*, p 402

far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of our troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time. The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literature. They neither intermarry, nor interdine together and, indeed they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Mussalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics—their heroes are different—and different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and likewise their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state.

In his correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi in September 1944 Mr Jinnah referred to other authorities viz Dr B R Ambedkar and M R T who had discussed the question whether the Indian Mussalmans were a separate nation and come to the conclusion that they were. He himself in his letter to Mahatma Gandhi dated 17.9.44 said

We maintain and hold that Muslims and Hindus are two major nations by any definition or test of a nation. We are a nation of a hundred million and what is more we are a nation with our own distinctive culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitudes and ambitions—in short we have our distinctive outlook on life and of life. By all canons of international law we are a nation.

That is about all that the country has been able to get from Mr Jinnah in the way of a clarification of the League theory that the Muslims in India are a separate nation.

M.R.T. to whom he referred Mahatma Gandhi and whose articles he printed in his book, *India's Problem of her Future Constitution* has discussed the matter at some length. He draws a distinction between nationality as it is understood in the East and nationality as it is understood in the West in as much as "the conception in the relations between religion and nationality differs in the East from that in the West".<sup>1</sup> He goes on to say

"Religion is considered not merely religion, in the strict sense as understood in the West by a Hindu or a Muslim but a complete social order which affects all the activities of life. In Islam, religion is the motive spring of all actions in life. A Muslim of one country has far more sympathies with a Muslim living in another country than with a non-Muslim living in the same country. Even now an Indian Muslim feels far more stirred by the distress of his Muslim brothers beyond India than by a similar calamity affecting non-Muslims in India."<sup>2</sup>

To illustrate "how the force of religion can be exercised in opposition to the idea of nationality" he gives a "typical example". Thus, "a German nationalist will take pride in the exaltation of his own country and will spare no efforts to advance its interests, though they may directly result in doing harm to another country. But if he becomes a convert to Islam and he is true to his religion, he will have to modify this conception of nationality so far as his relations are concerned with Muslims."<sup>3</sup> It follows that "a Muslim cannot reconcile his allegiance permanently to the theory of a single nation wherein he is required to merge his identity and lose contact with his religion as a dominating force or with the Muslims in other parts of the world."<sup>4</sup>

Emphasising the importance of religion, he says, "religion alone is a cohesive force for the idea of a nationality. In countries where the allegiance of people is divided on the basis of religion, the idea of a single nationality has never finally succeeded. In Germany, the Christians and Jews have lived together for centuries and

<sup>1</sup> M. A. Jinnah *India's Problem of Her Future Constitution*, p. 51

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 51-52

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 52

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 52



yet they have failed to weld together into a single nation " To the contention that in regard to language dress and food, it is difficult to distinguish Muslims from Hindus in various parts of India his answer is that affinity of language dress food etc alone does not form a sure basis for the growth of a single nation " Finally he says the real test of nationality is not an outward sign which may or may not exist but the desire on the part of the members of a nation to group themselves under a separate government of their own provided they are a compact majority in a compact unit of land "3

Dr Ambedkar in his *Thoughts on Pakistan* discusses the question whether Indian Mussalmans are a nation and comes to the conclusion that they are He defines nationality as a subjective psychological feeling It is a feeling of a corporate sentiment of oneness which makes those who are charged with it feel that they are kith and kin It is a feeling of consciousness of kind It is a longing to belong to one's own group and a longing not to belong to any other group This is the essence of what is called a nationality and national feeling 4 Then he applies this definition to the Muslim case and says Is it or is it not a fact that they have a consciousness of kind? Is it or is it not a fact that each Muslim is possessed by a longing to belong to his own group and not any non Muslim group? One can see that this definition however true is vague and by itself cannot lead us far On the strength of this definition one can have any number of nations in India For instance the Sikhs the so-called 'untouchables' the Bengalees the Oriyas the Brahmmins as well as non Brahmmins of Madras any political party say the Hindu Mahasabha or the Communist Party of India the East Bengal gentry, the Marwaris etc—each of these group of people may be termed a nation Indeed the corporate sentiment of oneness this "consciousness of kind the longing to belong to one's own group are not based only on religion They may be based on similarity of trade or of language of politics and of a hundred other things After this defi

*Ibid* pp. 52-53

*Ibid* p. 55

*Ibid* p. 56

B. R. Ambedkar *Thoughts on Pakistan* Bombay 1941 p. 25

tion, however, Dr. Ambedkar proceeds to a more solid argument and is constrained to concede that "a large majority of the Muslims belong to the same race as the Hindus," that "all Muhammadans do not speak a common tongue, that many speak the same language as the Hindus", that there are certain social customs, religious rites and practices that are common to both. But then he proceeds to explain away the community of race, tongue and even of social customs and conventions between Hindus and Muslims by extensive quotations from Renan's essay on "Nationality". Renan's views<sup>1</sup> as quoted by Dr Ambedkar "boil down to this that race, language and territory do not by themselves suffice to create a nation and that common historical antecedents and traditions are necessary. "Are there any common historical antecedents which the Hindus and Muslims can be said to share together as matters of pride or as matters of sorrow?"<sup>2</sup>, asks the Doctor triumphantly. And then he proceeds to answer his question, "They (Hindus and Muslims) have been just two armed battalions warring against each other"<sup>3</sup>. In a subsequent chapter in the same book he gives vivid description of the horrors of invasion led by Mohammad Bin Kasim and Mohammad Ghorı and also of the terrible nature of persecution suffered by Hindus in the hands of Muslim rulers. To Renan's theory that "forgetfulness of the past may form an essential factor in the creation of a nation", his answer is that "the two communities (Hindus and Muslims) can never forget or obliterate their past. Because their past is imbedded in their religion"<sup>4</sup>.

Besides M R T and Dr Ambedkar, Mr Jinnah has found support for Pakistan from an unexpected quarter. The support given by the Communist Party of India to Pakistan naturally came as a shocking surprise, in so far as viewed from the angle of communism as preached by Marx and practised by Lenin and even Stalin whom this party swears by, Mr Jinnah's present role in Indian politics must appear reactionary. For, religion has been a declared anathema to the Marxists. Marx, Lenin and Stalin have

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, pp 28-31

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p 29

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p 30

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p 31

for Islam was claimed for Christianity in Europe in the Middle Ages and for quite a long time after. Indeed, the very word modern is used in European history to mark the emergence of European society from a stage where religion used to be as important as M.R.T. claims for Islam now to one where the loyalties of people are determined not by religion but by territorial patriotism. A Muslim of one country says M.R.T. as we have seen in the previous chapter, has far more sympathies with a Muslim living in another country than with a Non Muslim living in the same country. That M.R.T. should know is no extra virtue of Islam only. A German Protestant had far more sympathies in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for an English or a French Protestant than with a German Catholic of his own country. Indeed German Protestants and French Protestants were only too ready to combine to kill German Catholics and French Catholics at that time. Loyalties of Christians in Western countries in the past were no more territorial and no less religious than M.R.T. claims for Islam and for the East. If following M.R.T.'s injunction a Muslim in India feels far more stirred by the distress of his Muslim brothers beyond India than by a similar calamity affecting non Muslims in India it argues that Indian Muslims are still in the feudal stage of civilisation and they do not constitute what is called a nation. The inhabitants of Turkey are mostly Muslims but a Muslim Turk does not feel 'far more stirred by the distress of his Muslim brothers beyond Turkey than by the distress affecting Non Muslims in Turkey. In a word their loyalties are neither exclusively nor even appreciably determined by their religion. M.R.T. may be justified in calling the Muslims of Turkey renegades or regarding the Indian Muslims as much better and in a truer sense Muslims than the Turks who however most certainly are a nation by any definition of a nation. The analogy of Germans given by M.R.T. is highly significant. He thinks that though a German's first duty is to his country if he is converted to Islam he must subordinate even stifle his patriotism if it is sought to be directed say, in times of war against a Muslim country. Whether a German Muslim will on the authority of Islam as set forth by M.R.T. be a fifth columnist rather than a patriot when

Germany declares war against a Moslem nation, we do not know. But we know that Arab Muslims in the Middle East did fight during the 1914-1918 War against Turkey, their Muslim overlord from whose yoke they sought independence in alliance with Kaffirs like Lawrence and Allenby. But then King Feisal and Emu Abdullah and the Muslims of Iraq are not the Indian Muslims of M R T and hence perhaps valued their independence more than the Islamic injunctions given by M R T which incidentally justify the Muslim leader who declared that "it is the right of minorities to be treacherous to the country".<sup>1</sup>

We do not know why Mr Jinnah referred Mahatma Gandhi to M R T who advocated plainly what is called Pan-Islamism which Mr Jinnah,—let us hope, sincerely—calls a "bogey".<sup>2</sup> Indeed, there is just one point about Mr. Jinnah which is helpful and that is his modern outlook. He has not based his claim of Pakistan on religion but on nationality and he seeks to justify it by "any definition of a nation". Self-determination, he is knowing enough to know, cannot be granted to any religious group as such. That is why he emphasises nationality, common language and literature, customs and traditions. His reference to Islam and Hinduism as 'not religions in the strict sense of the word' is due to the fact that he seeks to place Islam on a footing different from other religions. In his opinion the speciality of Islam is that it constitutes a nation. What he does not see or chooses not to see, is that Islam has no fundamental difference from Christianity in this respect, that even Christianity stood for a social order, that even Christianity was no less exclusive in the Middle Ages and launched no less a religious crusade than Islam did. The difference may lie in the degree of vigour and effectiveness of the crusades but there is certainly no difference in kind and nature. If the Christian countries have since been worshipping in the temple of territorial patriotism rather than of religion, it is because of other factors and tendencies which no part of the world can resist for a long time. If Islam had been any different from Christianity in its capacity to resist these factors and tendencies, Turkey would not have

<sup>1</sup> C Y Chintamani *Indian Politics since the Mutiny*, p. 66 Foot-note

<sup>2</sup> Gandhi-Jinnah Correspondence, 1944

divorced religion from politics and the Arab revolt against Turkish Imperialism could not have been successfully engineered by the British in the first Great War. Even in India M.R.T. or his interpretation of Islam cannot succeed for all time in putting the clock back.

With Dr Ambedkar, one is on a comparatively happier plane. He does not enunciate new principles but appears to apply the well known principles of nationality experts of the West. He bases his case on what he thinks to be historical facts which are however as we shall see presently, a fiction. Anyhow it is good that he invokes authorities of the West on the question of nationalities for we propose to show that on their authority the Muslims of India cannot constitute a separate nation.

Nationalism, as we know it was essentially a product of commercial expansion and capitalist development. A nation as Stalin puts it 'is not merely a historical category but a historical category belonging to a definite epoch the epoch of rising capitalism. The process of elimination of feudalism and development of capitalism was at the same time a process of amalgamation of people into nations'.<sup>1</sup> Machiavelli perhaps the earliest exponent of modern nationalism spoke of the Italian 'nation' as opposed to the Florentines Tuscans Venetians etc. Another landmark in the development of the idea of nationality was the partition of Poland among the rulers of Austria Prussia and Russia. The Napoleonic conquests after the French Revolution aroused the spirit of nationalism amongst the Russians Germans Italians Spaniards and so on. It is in this period that Kant Hegel Schiller Goethe Stein Fichte Wordsworth and Coleridge sang of nationalism. One has further to notice the break up of the Vienna Pact of 1815 in 1831 when the Belgians rose against and became independent of the Dutch. In none of these and certainly not in the nationalistic revolutions of 1848 all over the continent does one observe the element of religion playing any important part in politics. The categories of the national movement are not Christian Moslem Catholic 'Protestant

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Joseph Stalin *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question* (London) p 13

'Jewish' etc, but simply 'Italian', 'Turkish', 'Belgian', 'Dutch', 'Polish', 'German' and so on.

John Stuart Mill, a recognised authority on the question of nationality in his *Representative Government* (1861) defines Nationality thus: "A portion of mankind may be said to constitute a Nationality if they are united among themselves by common sympathies which do not exist between them and any others—which make them co-operate with each other more willingly than with other people, desire to be under the same Government, and desire that it should be government by themselves or a portion of themselves exclusively"<sup>1</sup> The generating and contributory causes of Nationality are summed up by him to be four, viz, (1) identity of race and descent, (2) community of language and of religion, (3) geographical limits, (4) identity of political antecedents which last he thinks to be the "strongest" factor. None of these however, he thinks as "either indispensable or necessarily sufficient by themselves"<sup>2</sup> He refers to Switzerland where "the cantons are of different races, different languages and different religions" He also refers in this context to Sicily, Belgium, Holland, France and Italy. It is to be noted that in Mill's definition of a "nation", community of religion plays only a very minor part. It is "neither indispensable nor necessarily sufficient" by itself. In the case of "Muslim India" of which Mr Jinnah speaks as one nation, community of religion is the only relevant factor. Muslims of India have no 'common race or descent', distinguished from the Hindus, no 'common language' and they are not all included in the same 'geographical limits'. Nor have they any identity of political antecedents. It is here that Dr Ambedkar is wrong in his facts. Barring the few occasions when the Muslim invaders penetrated into India, the Hindus and Mussalmans have not been in two warring camps throughout the centuries of what are called the Turkish, Pathan and the Mogul periods of Indian History. Once the invaders had established their 'Raj' in India, and settled down to government, religious differences between the

<sup>1</sup> J S Mill *Utilitarianism, Liberty, and Representative Government* (Everyman's Library), pp 359-60

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p 360

Hindus and the Muslims did not lead to any breach of peace among the people. For one thing the invaders who had come and left were not Indian Muslims. Those few among the invaders who settled down in India and remained to be Indian Muslims and these many who had been the natives of the soil and later took to the religion of the invaders voluntarily or by compulsion are our concern here. These Muslims of India did not form one camp and the Hindus did not form the opposite camp. To suggest that Indian history in the Turkish, Pathan and Mogul periods is the history of a long drawn war between the Hindus of India on one side and Muslims of India on the other is to betray a lamentable ignorance of Indian history. Indeed we may go so far as to say that Indian Muslims as a whole have no common political antecedents quite distinct from the Hindus. It is crass ignorance to suggest that wars in Indian history between Princes and principalities were religious wars between the Hindus on one side and the Muslims on the other. Even when a Hindu Prince fought a Muslim Prince their respective armies had been composite rather than homogeneous with Hindu and Muslim soldiers in each camp and no religious issue was involved.

The imperialist unifier of the olden days warred as much against his own co-religionists as against those of an alien faith. The earlier Hindu empires had been brought about by the invasion and subjugation of other Hindu states then existing. Even the staunchest of the Muslims

Aurangzeb invaded, conquered and annexed Muslim state of Bijapur and Golconda with as much thoroughness as he did the dominions of the Rajputs or the Marhattas.<sup>1</sup> To give one instance (and there are so many) from the history of Bengal Isha Khan of East Bengal had to fight Akbar the Great, his own co-religionist, the Emperor of Delhi who again sent not a Muslim but a Hindu General—Man Singh—to subjugate and annex Isha Khan's territory. Coming to the early British period we find that the British were indiscriminately warring with the Hindu as well as the Muslim Powers. In these wars the Hindu and Muslim states allied themselves against their own co-religionists as often as against the British and vice-versa to make war

against their nearest neighbours or rivals". The Muslims of India in so far as they are conscious of their political antecedents cannot reasonably be supposed to have common prejudices and prejudices. Indeed, it is absurd to suggest that Bengali Muslims ever had, unshared by Bengali Hindus, any common political antecedents with the Muslims of Sind or of the Frontier Province or even of the Punjab throughout the centuries when the Pathan and the Mogul Kings had been on the throne of Delhi. For the common masses one might not even have existed for the other. The Bengal Muslims as well as Hindus might—and indeed, did—pride themselves on the repeated attempts by the Muslim rulers of Bengal to free themselves from the yoke of Delhi. The heroes of the Muslims of Central and Northern India very often turned out to be villains before the Muslims of Eastern and Southern India. On the other hand, both Hindus and Muslims of Bengal looked and still look upon Serajuddowla as their own and glorify Mohanlal, a Hindu and Mirmadan, a Muslim, while they consider Muzafar, a Muslim and Umichand a Hindu, both a shame and a disgrace to their common fatherland. Indeed, even in the Pathan and Mogul periods of Indian History religion could not divide the Indian population into two opposite camps. The kings and emperors—unlike the British rulers—did not discriminate very much between the inhabitants of the country according to their religion in the matter of associating them with the administration, civil and military—of the country. In those centuries, Hindus and Muslims lived together with an amount of religious toleration quite unknown in those days among the two sects of what is the same religion—Christianity. It is not of course suggested that religious conflicts were entirely absent. India is a large country and clashes were bound to occur on religious as well as other grounds but they never became what is now called the Hindu-Muslim problem. Such clashes were never so strong as to make peace in society or good administration impossible. Common political life in India had been possible for centuries in spite of religious differences. The passage of time has shown a tendency to smooth and not to sharpen religious differences in every other country in the world.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p. 58



But British rule in India has been reversing the historical process and giving religion an unusual role in Indian politics it never played in the past—not certainly to an extent as it does now. As regards Dr Ambedkar's view that 'the two communities can never forget or obliterate their past', we should emphasise that much of this past is the glorious result of joint Hindu Muslim efforts for common good. Besides it is perhaps needless to point out that a great deal of the unsavouriness of this past has been a fabrication of the British historians and of personalities like Dr Ambedkar who appear to be determined not to let the communities unlearn what they have wrongly and mistakenly learnt. The past conflict between the Protestants and Catholics were also imbedded in their religion. But that fact has not prevented the two from forgetting their past and becoming a nation. Dr Ambedkar's wishful thinking is poor argument in favour of his wrong thesis.

We have seen that according to Mill's definition of a nation Indian Muslims do not constitute a separate nation. We have to invoke yet another authority to prove the worthlessness of Mr Jinnah's claim and particularly of the anti Marxist stand of his so-called Marxist supporters who talk of the Muslim Nationalities of India. The authority is Joseph Stalin who is regarded by Mr Joshi's party as the veritable Messiah of Communism in the world to-day. M. Stalin says: *A nation is a historically evolved stable community of language territory economic life and psychological make up manifested in a community of culture* <sup>1</sup>. He then adds: *It is only when all these characteristics are present that we have a nation* <sup>2</sup>. He takes particular care to say further: *It must be emphasised that none of the above characteristics (language territory economic life psychological make-up) is by itself sufficient to define a nation. On the other hand it is sufficient for a single one of these characteristics to be absent and the nation ceases to be a nation* <sup>3</sup> (Italics ours). If we apply this definition to India it becomes not a mono-national but a multi national country indeed but the nationalities are

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Joseph Stalin *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*

p. 8.

*Ibid* p. 9

*Ibid* p. 8

determined not by religion but by the complex of conditions set up by community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up. Muslims of India are not a nation by this definition, they only belong to one religion and religion is neither a fundamental attribute of nationality nor a contributory factor with Stalin. Indeed, the Russian Social-democrats followed Marx in considering religion as "the opium of the people". By talking of the right of "self-determination of the Muslim nationalities", the Communist Party of India sought to fall in line with Mr Jinnah's 'Muslim Nation' but thereby they have recorded their deviation from the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist line of thought. Indeed, there is conclusive evidence of the fact that Stalin could never have thought of the Indian Muslims as a separate nation. Even the phrase "psychological make-up" is not intended by Stalin to connote religion. In exploding the theory that Jews are a nation, (who incidentally have this advantage over the Muslims in India that unlike the latter they are racially one and have a common descent) Stalin says "what 'community of fate' and national cohesion can there be, for instance, between the Georgian, Daghestanian, Russian and American Jews, who are completely disunited, inhabit different territories and speak different languages? The Jews enumerated undoubtedly lead the same economic and political life as the Georgians, Daghestanians, Russians and Americans respectively, and in the same cultural atmosphere as the latter, this cannot but leave a definite impress on their national character, if there is anything common to them left it is their religion, their common origin [it may be remarked here that the Muslims in India have a common origin with the Hindus, but the Russian Jews have no common origin with the non-Jewish population of Russia—author] and certain relics of national character. All this is beyond question. But how can it be seriously maintained that petrified religious rites and fading psychological relics affect the 'fate' of these Jews more powerfully than the living social, economic and cultural environment that surrounds them? And it is only on this assumption that it is generally possible to speak of the Jews as a single nation"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p 10

If the Jews are not a separate nation it is clear how much less so are the Indian Mussalmans. The U.S.S.R. constitution follows from the Stalin formula of nationalities. Hence some republics are formed on the basis of nationalities not religions. If Stalin's formula is applied to India, this country becomes the home not of Hindu and Muslim and Sikh nationalities as the Joshi Adhikari group wants to see it but of Bengali Assamese Bihari Oriya, Punjabi and other nationalities. Indeed these nationalities cut across religious affiliations. There are Muslims in Soviet Russia, even Muslim contiguous areas but Stalin and Social democrats have no use or regard for them. The Muslims of Soviet Union have been mercilessly divided into nationalities according to territory language-economy culture complex of considerations and without any reference whatsoever to whether or not they are carving out Muslim majority areas. But Mr P C Joshi takes infinite pains<sup>1</sup> to do this for India and that in the name of Communism and Stalinism!

Mr Rajagopalachariar another supporter of Mr Jinnah's demand for Pakistan thinks that we cannot build a strong state for a country of India's size except by definite intermediate patriotisms serving to fix the loyalty of the individual citizens on a near centre and holds that this will not conflict with but help the building up of the larger patriotism and loyalty to the Federation or the Confederation. Indeed this is an argument for a Federal Constitution with maximum autonomy for the provinces which gives full scope to what he calls 'larger patriotism' and 'intermediate patriotisms'. The constitution of Soviet Russia as well as of U.S.A. is federal and provides for such different patriotisms. What is amusing is that Mr Rajagopalachariar sought to support Pakistan in the name of Russia. Indeed the Madras leader has made a fool of himself by trying to teach the Russian Lesson before taking good care to learn it. His article brought forth a conclusive reply from Sir N N Sircar<sup>2</sup> who made the point that C.R.'s proposition "is the very opposite of the 'Russian

<sup>1</sup> P. C. Joshi *They must not Fail*

<sup>2</sup> Sir N N Sircar *"The Russian Lesson"* A reply to Rajaji *Amrita Bazar Patrika* Cal Late City Edition August 26 1944

Lesson' " in as much as "the Soviet Constitution starts with Union, giving the right to separate, and not with division into separate States, which are not subordinate to any Central authority."<sup>1</sup> The C' R formula proposes to have separation first and to hope of unity afterwards. As Sir N. N. Sircar put it, "Working in Union, each constituent republic getting the benefit of the entire strength and resources of the USSR is expected to make that Union stronger and stronger than with which the start was made. The very opposite of this is starting with division than which nothing will be more conducive to increasing disunity."<sup>2</sup> Indeed, if India starts right with a vivisection, it has little chance of achieving unity. History and common sense agree that Union even a forced Union as in the case of Lincoln's America—may smooth over differences and curb separatist conceits ultimately but division never makes a country whole.

Article 17 of the Soviet Constitution which gives the right of secession to the constituent Union Republics follows the abstract principle of self-determination accorded to nationalities. Stalin accepted the principle in theory, but in practice he violated it in the name of another principle which fact proves that right of self-determination is not regarded as an absolute right by Stalin. In 1920, he said, "The demand for the secession of the border regions from Russia as the form that should be given to the relations between the centre and the border regions must be rejected not only because it is contrary to the very definition of the establishment of an alliance between the centre and the border regions, but primarily because it is fundamentally opposed to the interests of the mass of the peoples both of the centre and of the border regions."<sup>3</sup> And then he said again in 1923, "It should be borne in mind that besides the right of nations to self-determination there is also the right of the working class to consolidate its power, and to *this latter right the right of self-determination is subordinate* (Italics ours). There are occasions when the right of self-determination conflicts with the other, the higher right—the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Stalin *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*

right of a working class that has assumed power to consolidate its power. In such cases—this must be said bluntly—the right to self determination cannot and must not serve as an obstacle to the exercise by the working class of its right to dictatorship. The former must give way to the latter.<sup>1</sup> Stalin it is true admits the right of nationalities to secession but the right is not absolute in any sense. Referring to one of his previous articles he said, 'It may appear strange that the article emphatically rejects the demand for the separation of the border regions from Russia on the grounds that it is a counter-revolutionary proposal. We are *in favour* of the separation of India (meaning separation from the British empire—author) Arabia, Egypt Morocco and the other colonies from the Entente. We are *against* the separation of the border regions from Russia since separation would here involve imperialist servitude for the border regions thus undermining the revolutionary power of Russia and strengthening the position of imperialism. It is precisely for this reason that the Entente while resisting the separation of India Egypt Arabia and the other colonies is working for the separation of the border regions from Russia. It is precisely for this reason that Communists while working for the separation of the colonies from the Entente cannot but resist the separation of the border regions from Russia. Obviously the question of separation must be decided in accordance with the concrete international situation and the interests of the revolution.'<sup>2</sup>

That Stalin is equal to putting this theory into practice has been proved when Georgia—the territory inhabited by Stalin's own nation the Georgians—was prevented by force from having independent sovereignty when it demanded it. Ukraine and other Trans Caucasian territories were annexed by force to the Union. And yet the claim of these territorial units were backed by the fact that they have been the homes of distinct nationalities and not religious groups. One can easily imagine what support Mr Jinnah or the Joshi Adhikari group or Mr Rajagopalachari can hope to have from Stalin's theory and

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid* p 168

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid* p 298

practice on the question of "a Muslim nation" or of "Muslim nationalities"

We have seen that no principle can be justly invoked in favour of Pakistan. That principles have been wrongly or superficially invoked in support of Pakistan has been our contention in these pages. But apart from principles, practical considerations—and that is much more important in politics than mere principles—also show that "Pakistan", in the language of Dr Syed Abdul Latif, who has learnt wisdom later, "is an impossible issue and that culturally it will break the Muslim Community or nation—as Mr Jinnah calls it—permanently into several divisions"<sup>1</sup>

The problem of minorities will not be solved by vivisection, for the contemplated Pakistan will have a large Hindu minority in it just as the mutilated Hindustan will have a not inconsiderable Muslim minority. Economically, it has been pointed out unanimously by economic experts that Pakistan will be a bankrupt state. Militarily, it will not only be weak in itself but also make Hindustan weak with it. To have two sovereign states in India would perpetuate the domination of the third party, i.e., the British (or some other great Power if it can supplant the British) who will thrive on the weakness of the two states and play one against the other to ensure their hold on and exploitation of both. If material prosperity, moral dignity and national greatness are desirable by any Indian, be he a Muslim or a Hindu or a Sikh, he cannot afford to cut India into a number of independent, sovereign States. A Federal constitution with the widest powers to the constituent units consistent with safety and integrity of the Union is the only solution of the constitutional problem. Pakistan or vivisection in any form will spell disaster to the future of this country. It is a negation of independence, for independence under this condition will make for and perpetuate the domination of non-Indian Power or Powers to whose imperial machinations divided India will have perforce to be a victim. Indians should in no circumstances forget the condition of India in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when Anglo-French rivalry found a fertile soil in a divided

<sup>1</sup>From a speech of Dr Abdul Latif at Bezwada, published in the Calcutta Statesman, Late City Edition, 14-10-45

India and played a role disastrous to peace and future development of this country. No Indian should welcome the prospect of making his country an Eastern counterpart of that western cockpit the Balkans.

## APPENDIX A

### Full Text of the Communal Award

(1) In the statement made by the Prime Minister on December last, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, at the close of the second session of the Round Table Conference, which was immediately afterwards endorsed by both Houses of Parliament, it made plain that, if the communities in India were unable to reach a settlement acceptable to all parties on communal questions which the conference had failed to solve, His Majesty's Government were determined that India's constitutional advance should not on that account be frustrated, and they would remove this obstacle by devising and applying themselves to a provisional scheme

(2) On March 19 last, His Majesty's Government, having been informed that the continued failure of the communities to reach an agreement was blocking the progress of plans for the framing of the new constitution, stated that they were engaged upon a careful re-examination of the difficult and controversial questions which arise. They are now satisfied that, without the decision of at least some aspects of the problems connected with the position of the minorities under new constitution no further progress can be made with the framing of the constitution

(3) His Majesty's Government have accordingly decided that they will include provisions to give effect to the scheme set out below in the proposals relating to the Indian constitution to be laid in due course before Parliament. The scope of this scheme is purposely confined to the arrangements to be made for the representation of British Indian Communities in Provincial legislatures consideration of representation in the Legislatures at the centre being deferred for the reason given in paragraph 20 below. The decision to limit the scope of the scheme does not imply a failure to realise that the framing of the Constitution will necessitate the decision of a number of other problems of great importance to minorities, but has been taken in the hope that, once a pronouncement has been made upon the



basic question of the method and proportions of representation, the communities themselves may find it possible to arrive at a *modus vivendi* on the other communal problems which have not as yet received the examination they require

(4) His Majesty's Government wish it to be most clearly understood that they themselves can be no parties to any negotiations which may be initiated with a view to the revision of their decision and will not be prepared to give consideration to any representation aimed at securing a modification of it which is not supported by all the parties affected. But they are most desirous to close no doors to an agreed settlement should such happily be forthcoming. It therefore before the new Government of India Act is passed into law, they are satisfied that the communities who are concerned are mutually agreed upon a practicable alternative scheme either in respect of any one or more of the Governor's provinces or in respect of the whole of British India they will be prepared to recommend a parliament that the alternative should be substituted for the provisions now outlined.

(5) Seats in the Legislative Councils in Governor's Provinces or in the Lower House if there is an Upper Chamber will be allocated as shown in para 24 below.

(6) Election to the seats allotted to Muslim European and Sikh constituencies will be by voters voting in separate communal electorates covering between them the whole area of the province apart from any portions which may in special cases be excluded from the electoral area as 'backward'.

Provisions will be made in the constitution itself to empower revision of this electoral arrangements (and other similar arrangements mentioned below) after ten years, with the assent to the communities affected for the ascertainment of which suitable means will be devised.

(7) All qualified electors who are not voters either in a Muslim Sikh Indian Christian (See para 10) Anglo-Indian (See para 11) or European constituency will be entitled to vote in a general constituency.

(8) Seven seats will be reserved for Mahrattas in certain selected plural member general constituencies in Bombay

(9) Members of the "Depressed Classes" qualified to vote will vote in a general constituency. In view of the fact that, for a considerable period, these classes would be unlikely, by this means alone, to secure any adequate representation in a Legislature, a number of special seats, will be assigned to them as shown in Para 24 below. These seats will be filled by election from special constituencies in which only members of the "Depressed classes" electorally qualified will be entitled to vote. Any person voting in such special constituency will be, as stated above, be also entitled to vote in a general constituency. It is intended that these constituencies should be formed in selected areas where the "Depressed Classes" are most numerous, and that except in Madras they should not cover the whole area of the province. In Bengal, it seems possible that, in some general constituencies, the majority of the voters will belong to the "depressed classes". Accordingly, pending further investigation, no number has been fixed for members to be returned from special Depressed Classes constituencies in that province. It is intended to secure that the "Depressed Classes" should obtain not less than ten seats in the Bengal Legislature. The precise definition in each Province of those who (if electorally qualified) will be entitled to vote in special "Depressed class" constituencies has not yet been finally determined. It would be based as a rule on the general principles advocated in the Franchise Committee's report. Modification may, however, be found necessary in some provinces in Northern India where the application of the general criteria of untouchability might result in a definition unsuitable in some respects to the special conditions of the Province.

His Majesty's Government do not consider that these special "Depressed Classes" constituencies will be required for more than a limited time. They intend that the constitution shall provide that they shall come to an end after twenty years, if they have not previously been abolished under the general powers of the electoral revision referred to in Para 6

(10) Election to the seats allotted to Indian Christians will be by voters voting in separate communal electorates. It seems almost certain that the formation of Indian Christian constituencies covering the whole area of a province will be unpracticable and that accordingly special Indian Christian constituencies will have to be formed only in one or two selected areas in a province. Indian Christian voters in these areas will not vote in a general constituency. Indian Christian voters outside these areas will vote in a general constituency. Special arrangements may be needed in Bihar and Orissa where a considerable proportion of the Indian Christian community belongs to aboriginal tribes.

(11) Election to seats allotted to Anglo-Indians will be by voters in separate communal electorates. It is at present intended subject to investigation of any practical difficulties that may arise that Anglo Indian constituencies shall cover the whole area of each province postal ballot being employed but no final decision has yet been reached.

(12) The method of filling seats assigned for representatives from backward areas is still under investigation and number of seats so assigned should be regarded as provisional pending final decision as to the constitutional arrangements to be made in relation to such areas.

(13) His Majesty's Government attach great importance to securing that the new legislatures should contain at least a small number of women members. They feel that at the outset this object could not be achieved without creating a certain number of seats specially allotted to women. They also feel it is essential that women members should not be drawn disproportionately from one community. They have been unable to find any system which would avoid this risk, and would be consistent with the rest of the scheme for representation which they have found if necessary to adopt except that of limiting the electorate for each special women's seat to voters from one community subject to exception explained in para 24 below. Special women's seats have accordingly been specifically divided as explained in para 24 below between the various communities. The precise electoral machinery to be employed in these constituencies is still under consideration.

(14) Seats allotted to "Labour" will be filled from non-communal constituencies. Electoral arrangements have still to be determined, but it is likely that, in most provinces Labour constituencies will be partly Trade Union and partly special constituencies, as recommended by the Franchise Committee.

(15) Special seats allotted to Commerce and Industry, Mining and Planting will be filled by election through Chamber of Commerce and various Associations. Details of electoral arrangements for these seats must await further investigation.

(16) Special seats allotted to Landholders will be filled by election by special Landholders Constituencies.

(17) The method to be employed for election to University seats is still under consideration.

(18) His Majesty's Government have found it impossible, in determining these questions of representation in provincial legislatures, to avoid entering into considerable detail. There remains nevertheless the determination of the constituencies. They intend that this task should be undertaken in India as early as possible.

It is possible, in some instances, delimitation of constituencies might be materially improved by slight variation from number of seats now given. His Majesty's Government reserve the right to make such slight variations for such purpose, provided they will not materially affect the essential balance between the communities. No such variations will, however, be made in the case of Bengal and the Punjab.

(19) The question of the composition of Second Chambers in the provinces has so far received comparatively little attention in the constitutional discussions and requires further consideration before a decision is reached which provinces shall have a Second Chamber or a Scheme is drawn up for their composition. His Majesty's Government consider that the composition of the Upper House in a province should be such as not to disturb, in any essential, the balance between the communities resulting from the composition of the Lower House.

(20) His Majesty's Government do not propose at present to enter into the question of size and composition.

of the Legislature at the Centre, since this involves among other questions that of representation of Indian states which still needs further discussion. They will of course, when considering the composition pay full regard to claims of all communities for adequate representation therein.

(21) His Majesty's Government have already accepted the recommendation that Sind should be constituted a separate province, if satisfactory means of financing it can be found. As the financial problems involved still have to be reviewed in connection with other problems of federal finance His Majesty's Government have thought it preferable to include at this stage figures for a legislature for the existing province of Bombay in addition to the schemes for separate legislatures for the Bombay presidency proper and Sind.

(22) The figures given for Bihar and Orissa relate to the existing province. The question of constituting a separate province of Orissa is still under investigation.

(23) The inclusion in para 24 below of figures relating to the legislature for the central provinces including Berar does not imply that any decision has yet been reached regarding the future constitutional position of Berar.

(24) The following will be the allocation of seats in provincial legislatures (Lower House only) —

#### MADRAS

General seats (including six women)	134
Depressed Classes	18
Representative from Backward areas	1
Muslims (including one woman)	29
Indian Christian (including one woman)	9
Anglo-Indians	2
Europeans	3
Commerce and Industry Mining and Planting	6
Land holders	1
University	1
Labour	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>210</b>

BOMBAY  
(Including Sind)

General seats (including five women)	.	.	97
Depressed Classes .. ..	..	.	10
Backward Areas . ..	..	..	1
Muslims (including one woman)	..		63
Indian Christians .. ..	..	.	3
Anglo-Indians . ..	..	.	2
Europeans .. ..	..	..	4
Commerce Etc .. ..	..	.	8
Land-holders . . .	..	..	3
University .. ..	..	..	1
Labour .. ..	..	..	8
TOTAL			200

BENGAL

General seats (including 2 women)	.	.	80
Depressed Classes . ..	.	.	—
Muslims (including 2 women) ..		.	119
Indian Christians . . .		.	2
Anglo-Indians (including one woman)	..		4
Europeans . . .	.	.	11
Commerce Etc . . .	..	.	19
Land-holders . . .	..	..	5
University .. ..	..	..	2
Labour .. .	.		8
TOTAL			250

UNITED PROVINCES

General seats (including 4 women)			132
Depressed Classes . . .	.	.	12
Muslims (including 2 women)	.		66
Indian Christians . . .	.		2
Anglo-Indians .. ..	..		1
Europeans . . .	.		2
Commerce Etc . . .	.	.	3
Land-holders . . .	.		6
University . . .	.	.	1
Labour .. .	..	..	3
TOTAL			228

## PUNJAB

General seats (including one woman)	43
Sikhs (including one woman)	32
Muslims (including two women)	86
Indian Christians	2
Anglo-Indians	1
Europeans	1
Commerce Etc	1
Land holders	5
University	1
Labour	3
	<hr/>
TOTAL	175

## BIHAR AND ORISSA

General seats (including 3 women)	99
Depressed classes	7
Representatives from Backward Areas	8
Muslims (including 1 woman)	42
Indian Christians	2
Anglo Indians	1
Europeans	2
Commerce etc	4
Land holders	5
University	1
Labour	4
	<hr/>
Total	175

## CENTRAL PROVINCES

(including Berar)

General seats (including three women)	77
Depressed classes	10
Representatives from Backward Areas	1
Muslims	14
Anglo-Indians	1
Europeans	1
Commerce etc	1
Land holders	3
University	1
Labour	2
	<hr/>
Total	112

## ASSAM

General seats (including one woman)	..	..	44
Depressed Classes	..	..	4
Representatives from Backward Areas	..	..	9
Muslims	..	..	34
Indian Christians	..	..	1
European	..	..	1
Commerce Etc.	..	.	11
Labour	..	..	4
			<hr/>
Total ..			108

## NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

General seats	..	..	..	9
Sikhs	..	..	..	3
Muslims	..	..		36
Land-holders	..	..	.	2
				<hr/>
Total				50

Seats are also allocated for Bombay without Sind and for Sind as follows —

## BOMBAY WITHOUT SIND

General seats (including 5 women)				109
Depressed classes	.			10
Representatives from Backward areas				1
Muslims (including 1 woman)	.			30
Indian Christians	.	.	.	3
Anglo-Indians			.	2
Europeans	.			3
Commerce Etc.				7
Land-holders	..	..		2
University	.	..	.	1
Labour	..	.	..	7
				<hr/>
Total .				175



## SIND

General seats (including 1 woman)	19
Muslims (including 1 woman)	34
Europeans	2
Commerce Etc	2
Land holders	2
Labour	1
	<hr/>
Total	60

## Special Constituencies

As regards seats of Commerce and industry Mining and Planting it is stated that the composition of bodies through which election of these seats will be conducted though in most cases either predominantly European or predominantly Indian will not be statutorily fixed. It is accordingly not possible in each province to state with certainty how many Europeans and Indians respectively will be returned

It is however expected that initially, the numbers will be approximately as follows —

Madras 4 Europeans and 2 Indians

Bombay (including Sind) 5 Europeans and 3 Indians

Bengal 14 Europeans and 5 Indians

United Provinces 2 Europeans and 1 Indian

Punjab 1 Indian

Bihar and Orissa 2 Europeans and 2 Indians

Central Provinces (including Berar) 1 European and 1 Indian

Assam 8 Europeans and 3 Indians

Bombay (without Sind) 4 Europeans and 3 Indians

Sind 1 European and 1 Indian

As regards general seats allocated to Bombay, whether inclusive or exclusive of Sind it is stated seven of them will be reserved for Mahrattas

As regards allocation of seats for Depressed Classes in Bengal this number which will not exceed ten has not yet

been fixed. The number of general seats will be thirty, less the number of Special Depressed Class' seats.

As regards Land-holders seats in Punjab, it is stated one of these will be a 'Zamindars' seat. Four Land-holders' seats will be filled from special Constituencies with Joint electorates. It is probable from distribution of the electorate that the members returned will be one Hindu, one Sikh and two Muslims.

As regards allocation of one woman's seat among general seats in Assam, it is stated this will be filled from a non-Communal Constituency at Shillong.

Premiers explanatory statement on the Communal Award.—

"Not only as the Prime Minister, but as a friend of India who has for the last two years taken a special interest in the questions of minorities I feel that I ought to add a word or two of explanation to the extremely important decision on communal representation that the Government are announcing to-day.

"We never wished to intervene in the communal controversies of India. We made that abundantly clear during both the sessions of the R T C when we strove hard to get Indians to settle this matter between themselves. We have realised from the very first that any decision that we may make is likely, to begin with at any rate, to be criticised by every community purely from the point of view of its own complete demands, but we believe that in the end consideration of Indian needs will prevail and all communities will see that their duty is to co-operate in working the new constitution which is to give India a new place in British Commonwealth of Nations.

"Our duty was plain. As the failure of the Communities to agree amongst themselves has placed an almost insurmountable obstacle in the way of any constitutional development, it was incumbent upon Government to take action in accordance, therefore, with the pledges that I gave on behalf of the Government at the Round Table Conference in response to repeated appeals from representative Indians and in accordance with the statement to British Parliament and approved by it. Government are to-day publishing a scheme of representation' in Provincial

Assemblies that they intend in due course to lay before parliament unless in the meanwhile the communities themselves agree upon a better plan. We should be only too glad if at any stage before the proposed Bill becomes law, the communities can reach an agreement amongst themselves. But guided by the past experience Government are convinced that no further negotiations will be of any advantage and they can be no party to them. They will, however be ready and willing to substitute for their scheme any scheme whether in respect of any one or more of Governor's provinces or in respect of the whole of British India that is generally agreed and accepted by all the parties affected.

In order to appreciate the Government's decision it is necessary to remember that actual conditions in which it is being given. For many years past, separate electorates namely the grouping of particular categories of voters in territorial constituencies by themselves has been regarded by minority communities as an essential protection for their rights. In each of the recent stages of constitutional development separate electorates have consequentially found a place. However much Government may have preferred an uniform system of Joint electorates they found it impossible to abolish safeguards to which minorities still attach vital importance. It would serve no purpose to examine the cause which in the past have led to this state of affairs. I am rather thinking of the future. I want to see the greater and smaller communities working together in peace and amity so that there will be no further need for a special form of protection. In the meantime however Government have to face facts as they are and must maintain this exceptional form of representations.

There are two features of the decision to which I must allude one has to do with the depressed classes and the other with the representation of women. Government would be quite unable to justify a scheme which omitted to provide what is really requisite for either.

'Our main object in the case of the Depressed Classes has been while securing to them the spokesmen of their own choice in the legislatures of the Province where they

are found in large numbers, at the same time to avoid electoral arrangements which would perpetuate their segregation. Consequently, Depressed Class voters will vote in general Hindu constituencies and an elected member in such a constituency will be influenced by his responsibility to this section of the electorate, but for the next 20 years there will also be a number of special seats filled from special depressed class electorates in the areas where these voters chiefly prevail. The anomaly of giving certain members of the depressed Classes two votes is abundantly justified by the urgent need of securing that their claims should be effectively expressed and the prospects of improving their actual condition promoted.

“As regards women voters, it has been widely recognised in recent years that the women's movement in India holds one of the keys of progress. It is not too much to say that India cannot reach the position to which it aspires in the world until its women play their due part as educated and influential citizens. There are undoubtedly serious objections to extending to the representation of women the Communal method, but if seats are to be reserved for women as such and woman members are to be fairly distributed among the communities, there is, in the existing circumstances, no alternative.

“With this explanation, I commend the scheme to Indian Communities as a fair and honest attempt to hold the balance between the conflicting claims in relation to the existing position in India. Let them take it though it may not for the moment satisfy the full claims of any of them as a workable plan for dealing with the question of representation in the next period of India's constitutional development. Let them remember, when examining the scheme, that they themselves failed when pressed again and again to produce to us some plan which would give general satisfaction.

“In the end, Indians themselves can settle this question. The most that Government can hope for is that their decision will remove an obstacle from the path of Constitutional advance and will thus enable Indians to concentrate their attention upon solving the many issues that still remain to be decided in the field of constitutional advance. Let leaders of all Communities show, at this critical moment in India's

Constitutional development, their appreciation of the fact that Communal Co-operation is a condition of progress and that it is their special duty to put upon themselves the responsibility of making the new constitution work

## APPENDIX B

### C R FORMULA

1. Subject to the terms set out below as regards the constitution for "Free India", the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for Independence and will co-operate with Congress in the formation of a provisional interim Government for the transitional period

2 After the termination of the war, a Commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the north-west and east of India, where in Muslim population is in Majority In the areas thus demarcated, a plebiscite of all the inhabitants held on the basis of adult suffrage or other practicable franchise shall ultimately decide the issue of separation from Hindusthan. If the majority decide in favour of forming a sovereign State separate from Hindusthan, such decision shall be given effect to, without prejudice to the right of district on the border to choose to join either State

3 It shall be open to all parties to advocate their points of view before plebiscite is held

4 In the event of separation mutual agreements shall be entered into for safeguarding defence, and commerce and communications and for other essential purposes

5 Any transfer of population shall only be on an absolutely voluntary basis

6 These terms shall be binding only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility for the Government of India.

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